



Collected Poems

MANMOHAN GHOSE

*Author of Love Songs and Elegies and
Songs of Love and Death*

Volume III



UNIVERSITY OF CALCUTTA

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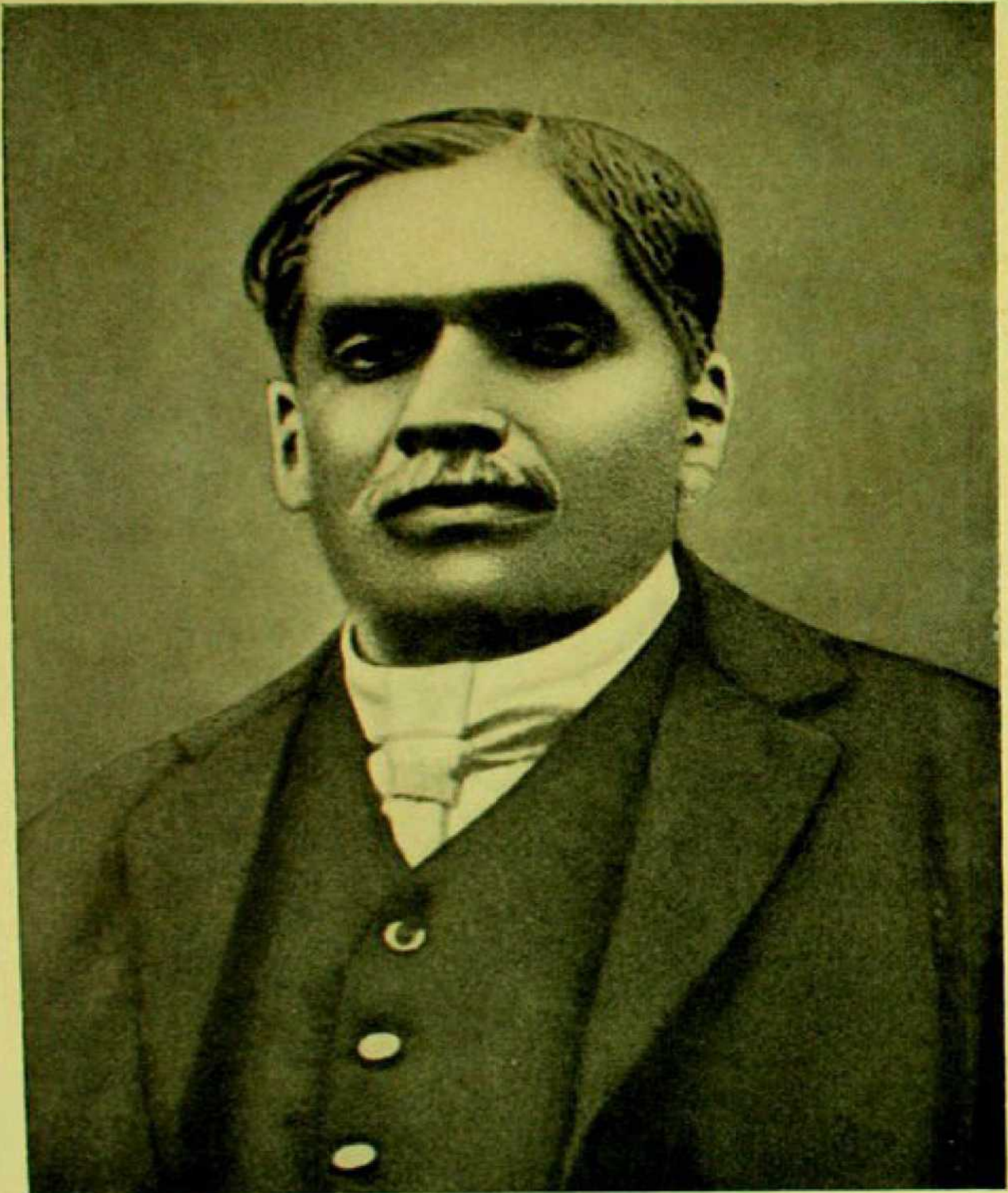
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Orphic Mysteries And Immortal Eve

Edited by
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MANMOHAN GHOSE (1869—1924)
at the age of 42.



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PREFACE

Manmohan Ghose's marriage and the tragic consequences of his wife's illness and its nature had a pronounced effect on his poetry. It was after his marriage in 1898 that the poet happily settled down to writing what he intended to be his magnum opus, *Perseus, the Gorgon-Slayer*, a Homeric epic in blank verse. Seven years after his marriage the illness of his wife which was to be such a heavy strain on the poet's health, mental peace and serenity commenced. But inspite of the burden of college teaching, looking after his sick wife, bringing up two children aged three and five and running the household, the poet spent many a midnight hour adding to his epic or re-writing what he had written. However the sustained effort which an epic, whose scope was to be universal, required was almost impossible with the result that what the poet has left of the epic except the first few books are unlinked passages. The circumstances leading to its abandonment is told elsewhere, but it was related to the baseless suspicion of the Government that the epic was an anti-British political poem.

Having given up further work on *Perseus* Manmohan Ghose started a drama on Nala and Damayanti. The poet seems to have reconciled himself to abandoning *Perseus* for the time-being. A student of his tells us that when he visited the poet some time in 1916, the poet told him that he would very much like to write two plays on Indian subjects, one from ancient mythology, one from contemporary life.

In November 1918 when only five scenes of his drama *Nollo and Damayanti* had been written, his wife suddenly died, a victim to the influenza epidemic that broke out immediately after the 1st World War. An upsurge of lyric inspiration which gave expression to the poet's devoted love for his wife and sorrow at her death led to the abandonment of *Nollo and Damayanti*. After its abandonment lyric after lyric flowed from his pen which were later grouped into two lyric series entitled *Orphic Mysteries* and *Immortal Eve*. Laurence Binyon editing a selection of the poet's lyric poetry entitled *Songs of Love and Death* writes in the Introductory Memoir : "The devotion of his love for his wife, the desolation of his loss inspired the group of poems called *Immortal Eve* and *Orphic Mysteries* containing the finest and most original of his lyrics."

Orphic Mysteries throb with the intense sorrow of recent bereavement and all those who have suffered from similar loss must find an

answering echo in their hearts. H. R. James who was at Christ Church College, Oxford, as "a sort of Vice-Don" when Manmohan Ghose was a "Scholar" there and who later became Principal of the Presidency College, Calcutta where Manmohan Ghose was working at the time as a Professor of English Literature wrote to Manmohan Ghose from London after his retirement : "I have come across a poem of yours in the new and glorified—Calcutta Review, which at all events assures me that your power of writing beautiful poetry continues undiminished. This poem, *The Rider on the White Horse*, goes straight home to me and I thank you for it. It is a sad poem but the beauty transcends and conquers the sadness. You show all your old, I would even say a new mastery of rhymed metre and mastery of words as perfect as ever. It seems to me a masterpiece so nobly conceived and true so that I thank you again for the something that is pleasure, yet higher than pleasure that I felt on reading it."

After his wife's death Manmohan Ghose tried to find some means of communication with her spirit. At the time, due to the devastating loss of life suffered in the First World War affecting a majority of English families, there was keen pursuit of spiritualism and Manmohan Ghose started reading the works of Oliver Lodge and others. In the evenings there were sessions of automatic writing in which the poet questioned and got answers from his dead wife, but soon these were given up. Gradually it seemed that he got in touch with some world of subtle forms and a door of communication was opened. The unfinished poem *Through the Breath of the Rose* gives us some idea of the poet's experience of this world. The point at which the poem remains unfinished seems to indicate that the poet lost touch with this subtle physical world and contacted a higher spirit-world from which his wife's soul communicated with him through butterflies. When he was almost blind with cataract he received messages from his wife in golden letters comforting and counselling him. During his last illness he could be heard softly talking to his wife as if she were beside him. This was in full consciousness. Many may regard this aspect of his life as self-hypnotism, but, be this as it may, his experience, real or imaginary, found expression in exquisite poetry. The depth of his sorrow, also brought him concretely in touch with the central stillness which is both the support and the inexhaustible source of the dynamic play of energy. And yet there is the eternal pity the divine grace which descends for the Creator is not apart from but a part of his own creation.

"Cease for thy falling tear-drops
Have dimmed the eternal eyes

And thy heart's rending sorrow
Disturbs heaven's harmonies.

Thou canst not pierce with grieving
The austere awful hush
Around whose central stillness
The stars in millions rush.

Round whom our angel armies
Wheel, and with solemn awe
Make with our heavenly motions
The music that is law.

In a trance of stillness the poet too witnesses the dynamic movement which is creation.

Unalighting, lost in repose, the glorious worlds that roll
All and each I saw in a flash to a wingéd thing ensoul
Our earth, too, a mothlike creature that hovers on either pole.

Except in connection with his college lectures Manmohan Ghose's reading consisted of the ancient classics. Homer, Aeschylus, Sophocles, Pindar, Dante and Virgil were his special favourites. These authors he would read, softly reciting to himself sometimes, during his walks in his garden or terrace or pacings in the rooms and verandah. As such it is but natural that he should be profoundly influenced by Greek metrical forms and patterns and that Greek metrical echoes should find a place in his poetry.

After the lyrics of the Orphic Mysteries series, which express his deep personal grief, the poet started in the last year of his life a series of Choric Odes in which he intended to narrate the grief of Orpheus and his journey to Hades to bring back Eurydice to earth. The purpose of the journey, permitted by the gods, was that Orpheus should be 'of Death's dark way to men a hierophant'.

That Orpheus reveal
To all that mortal is,
Clearer and heal
With music and mystery
The tomb's dark sorrow
On blind urged history
Make Hades morrow.

A personal note comes in when the butterfly offers to show Orpheus the way to Hades, though there is also a symbolic significance the butterfly being a symbol of the soul.

Unfortunately, not only was the poet slowly fading out of life when he wrote these odes but he was, at the time, almost blind due to cataract. The poet had no alternative but to dictate them to his elder daughter. Further the complex verse form and the elaborate rhyme structure in which the Odes were being composed made things difficult as the poet was unable to see and it is but natural that in places the meaning has become obscure due to grammatical inversions and there are instances of failure to cope with the intricate dissyllabic rhyming. The success of the poet in dealing with the same verse form and intricate rhyming pattern in the Ode on the Centenary of the Presidency College shows that had the poet lived to regain his sight he would have corrected these errors and recast the odes in a perfect mould for the poet was a severe critic of his own compositions. It is hoped that the Odes and the blemishes therein will not be used to belittle Manmohan Ghose's poetry as a whole. In fact they had to be included as the Volume is part of the Collected Poems of Manmohan Ghose.

The *Immortal Eve* series is very different. Here metrical variety gives place to the simple ballad metre and four lined stanzas. They are an exquisite blending of the individual, typical and universal, a pean in praise of womanhood, primaeval and eternal in which his dead wife burgeons and blooms into Eve immortally one but many, Helen, Emelia, Evadne, Iseult, Phyllis, while the individual she shines like a star, beyond and above for she is the poet's own beloved, whom life with its sorrows and sufferings shapes till perfection is reached. And scattered in these poems like stars in a dark blue firmament are thoughts of eternal wisdom, spontaneously arising with all the simplicity of true profundity.

Though you revive lost bliss, your heart
Cradles august the pain,
The ancient primal woe of man
That aches to mother Cain.

I mind not now the mystery
Of cruel wrong and strife
The ancient wail through history
This tangle deep as life.

I know there is a power that works
All things to harmonise
I know it from the ruth that lurks
Deep in your gentle eyes.

Laurence Binyon has very aptly given this series of lyrics the subtitle 'Songs of the Triumph and Mystery of Beauty.' The last words of the

poet were, 'I long for the Beautiful.' The Beautiful ! It was the poet's search, Beauty in the physical sphere, Goodness and moral elevation in the ethical sphere, and Harmony in the aesthetic and spiritual sphere. It was this unfulfilled longing that he tried to express in his poetry, with what success only the future which carries in its lap all that is eternal and reaches beyond Time can say.

It is strange that even after thirty years residence in India Manmohan Ghose's poetry should show such little trace of the Indian environment. The main reason for this strange phenomenon appears to me to be that the inner world in which the poet lived and which was the soil from which his poetry sprung was Europe, more particularly England and ancient Greece. In fact as far as his poetry is concerned it is as if the poet never left the shores of England. The trees and flowers of England grow and blossom in every page. Two poems written in the last year of his life, *April* and *Autumn* recall the mood and portray these seasons with astonishing vividness though thirty years had separated him from the land of his Muse. A longer poem, *The Pool of Narcissus*, is suffused with the poet's delight in the forests and mountains of Wales. As in the heart of the poet so in the poem the early Celtic twilight of magic and mystery embrace and melt into the insight into Nature, the rich mythology and art and poetry of Greece.

Though passionately lorn your air,
Your beauty, friend, recalls to me
Some Polycleiton figure fair
Boyhood's divine-cheeked purity.

The bloom, the strength, the lovely dew
Of youth the Argive sculptor felt
When bronze was beauty liyes in you
The dreamier impassioned Celt.

And again

"Thus oldest oak-glooms overhead
Out of their gnarled antiquity
Wise immortal whispers shed
To urge us on the path of glee.

* * *

No sager oracles were they
The glorious dead grandsires of these
Deemed prophets by the Druid, gray
Majestic acre-shadowing trees

Dodona's thousand whispered oaks
Might this be which with leafy tongue
Of glades hyperborean speak
Where all things are forever young.

* * *

And see Apollo's golden isle
And mix in mirthful revel there
Where spring doth into summer smile
With those hyperborean fair

Young men and maids. Rose-garlanded
There in the glorious dance's whirl
We too the unfading sword shall tread
Have speech of bloom-cheeked youth and girl

Phoebus' sage votaries. There shall we
At inspiration's Delphic eyes
Know from divine-lipped poesy
All that is beautiful and wise.

But there was another reason too why Manmohan Ghose did not want to Indianise his poetry. He was too true a poet to resort to exoticism. Like Sarojini Naidu he did not give a lilting cadence to his verse with the names of Indian trees, flowers, birds and gods, for the cadence of his verse rose from the inner music of English words which few English poets have been able to sound so consistently. To him words were empty without the enrichment of association and literary use. As such, words from Indian languages would sound a hollow note or at best have only an exotic value to the English reader. It is also to be noted that Manmohan Ghose's mastery of English and Greek metres and verse forms are remarkable.

In this context it is interesting to find that the poetry of even such a powerful poet as Sri Aurobindo, though he chooses Indian subjects for his more significant works, bears the stamp of ancient Greece. There is however nothing foreign or exotic about Sri Aurobindo's poetry. The cadence and clear-cut concrete imagery is more akin to Greek than to Sanskrit poetry. His successful experiments to introduce Greek quantitative metres is a distinct contribution to English poetry. Again in *Savitri* Sri Aurobindo has given a new dimension to epic verse. He has transferred to it the sense of the *mantra* by introducing numerous end stopped lines conveying revealing truths and giving a feeling of the ultimate but he has not violated the inner essence of epic expression.

Instead of using it only for the expression of the elevated, the noble and sublime, he has lifted it to the region of the absolute. Sri Aurobindo has also enriched English poetry by planting in its soil the seeds of the Indian spiritual experience.

Though a little isolated, Manmohan Ghose's poetry is a distinct tributary of English poetry. Manmohan Ghose has in his own quiet and gentle way made an impressive contribution to it. Apart from his humanity, no English poet has portrayed so vividly the pain and effort that is involved in the historic march forward of human evolution and the agonising pangs associated with the emergence of the soul as the leader of the march. It is to be hoped that when poetic fashions, national prejudices and predilections will yield place to deeper universal and eternal values in poetic judgements, the poetry of both brothers will receive their true evaluation.

I

CAN IT BE ?

I mind me how her smile was sweet
And how her look was gay.
O, she was laughter, joy complete !
And can she now be clay ?

I see the roses on her grave
They make my sad heart bleed.
I see the daisies shine like stars.
And is she earth indeed ?

All lovely things with beauty are,
And just deeds shine as just.
And faith and truth and duty are.
And is she only dust ?

The great sky keeps its solemn blue :
Fresh earth is wildly fair.
Can all things be, and I and you,—
She nothing, she nowhere ?



ORPHIC MYSTERIES

II

THE RIDER ON THE WHITE HORSE

How did I lose you, sweet ?
 I hardly know.
Roughly the storm did beat,
 Wild winds did blow.
I with my loving arm
 Folded you safe from harm,
 Cloaked from the weather.
How could your dear foot drag ?
Or did my courage sag ?
Heavy our way did lag,
 Pacing together.

I looked in your eyes afraid,
 Pale, pale, my dear !
The stones hurt you, I said,
 To hide my fear.
You smiled up in my face,
You smothered every trace
 Of pain and languor.
Fondly my hand you took,
But all your frail form shook ;
And the wild storm it struck
 At us in anger.

The wild beast woke anew ;
 Closely you clung to me.
Whiter and whiter grew
 Your cheek and hung to me.
Drooping and faint you laid
Upon my breast your head,—
 Footsore and laggard.
Look up, dear love, I cried :
But my heart almost died,

PORTALS OF VISION

As you looked up and sighed,—
 Dead-weary, staggered.
There came a rider by ;
 Gentle his look.
I shuddered, for his eye
 I could not brook.
Muffled and cloaked he rode,
And a white horse bestrode
 With noiseless gallop.
His hat was mystery,
His cloak was history ;
Pluto's consistory
 Or Charon's shallop

Could not the dusky hue
 Of his robe match,
His face was hard to view,
 His tone to catch.
 "She is sick, tired. Your load,
A few miles of the road,
 Give me to weather."
He took as 'twere a corse
Her fainting form perforce.
In the rain rider, horse,
 Vanished together.

Come back, dear love, come back !
 Hoarsely I cry ;
After that rider black
 I peer and sigh :
After that phantom steed
I strain with anxious heed,
 Heartsick and lonely.
Into the storm I peer
Through wet woods moaning drear.
Only the wind I hear,
 The rain see only.



ORPHIC MYSTERIES

III

THE DEWDROP

In the bliss, they say, of the love that laves the skies and
ocean and earth,
All things hasten to lose, they say, the grieving ripple of
birth.
Why, then, ah ! do I tremble and pale at the thought of
thee, O Death,
And shivering, stand to take my plunge in that infinite
sea of breath ?
There are the lost joys of my life, far sunk beyond rave
and fret ;
There are the souls of dreams unflowered, and the roses
of regret.
There is the sunken dreadful gold of the once that might
have been,
Shipwrecked memory anchors there, and my dead leaves
there are green.
Why in the merge of all with all by a plunge recoverable,
Desperate diver shudder I from all pearls in one shell ;
For there more precious than all things lost is the one
that I let fall,
One heart brimful of love for me, her love that encasketed all.
Dear, like a trembling drop of dew I held thee in my hand ;
How of a sudden could I so spill as to lose it in infinite sand,
Fresh on the rose-petal of life, with its fragrance through
and through
Drenching my heart ? I held thee long, thou trembling
drop of dew.
As I stood sadly secure of thee, as happy I looked my fill,
Thou from that rose petal didst glide and vanish in salt sea rill.
Now by the infinite shore I roam, the bliss that all
things laves ;
Down-bent, weeping, I seek for thee by a mournful
music of waves,

PORTALS OF VISION

Deaf to the grandeur and the roar that hath washed
thee away from me ;

In the streaming sands and my own salt tears I wildly
look to thee.

Thou with the freshness and the foam art glorying
borne away ;

I mid wreck and driftwood grope and dally with all dismay.
"Come back, tremulous heart," I sob, "heart's bliss, come
back," I cry.

Only the solemn ecstasy of waters makes reply.

•



ORPHIC MYSTERIES

IV

A VISION OF DEATH AND SLEEP

O'er her death-bed
With sobs I hung,
Wild, idle sobs, and in my lonely pain
Kiss'd the dead face again and yet again,
And to the cold form passionately clung
Weeping.
With peaceful head
She on her pillow,
As past this angry billow,
Life's rude tumultuous rocking, in some bay
Anchored, some far enchanted haven, lay
Sleeping.

Wild, idle tears
I shed to know
That she was gone for ever past my hail,
That was the glint of her departing sail,
That peace ineffable. I long'd to go
Thither !
For, past all fears
And shocks of sorrow,
In the eternal morrow
Her drifting bark had anchored. I left lone
On life's rude sea longed for that world unknown—
Whither ?

As thus I wept,
And watched in awe
Rapt with the beauty of that angel strand
Where I was sure her soul had driven aland
The ecstatic, white, still, face 'twas then I saw,
Weeping,
How toward me stept
Two forms of glory
Pilots of our brief story

PORTALS OF VISION

Who lull and convoy nature. Gently they
Came, where in trance marmoreal she lay
Sleeping.

Sleep o'er her head
Death at her feet
Silent and shadowy stood. I knew them come
To carry what I loved to its last home,—
Her body, that familiar form too sweet.

"Lover,"
Sleep pitying said,
"Take thy last kisses
Of her. Alas, what bliss is
To thee that senseless relic ? Pilots we
Of nature, come to waft mortality
Over."

O'er the dear clay
Weeping I hung :
To me each atom of her earth and life
Smelt not of death but blossomed memory-rife
Old smiles, love, kisses, tears. To it I clung
Weeping.
"Take not away,
Angels of pity,
From me the ransacked city
Where dwell such tender memories. Spare her,
Death !
Leave her a lovely mummy void of breath,
Sleeping."

"Vainly thou prayest,
Made blind with pain,"
Death answered. "Each dear particle, each mote
That once made up her sweetness wouldst thou dote
So fondly on, to have with thee remain
Eternal ?
They cry us haste



ORPHIC MYSTERIES

To ship them. Weeper,
We wafted have thy sleeper
To bliss. That is not she. Across the river,
Time's wintry stream, she breathes and flowers
for ever
Vernal I

Dissever then
Thy arms from dust
That once was proud to sheathe her, be the dress,
Organ and tool of so much loveliness ;
Great nature back demands her loan. Be just,
Not crazy
With grief and pain.
We come to carry
What was her dear flesh, marry
Anew in life's great ferment ; to compose
Flowers on her grave triumphant, kingcup, rose,
Daisy."

With a wild cry
I clung to her—
The 'all that dreadful immortality
Spared of the warm, terrestrial, trivial she,—
All that had laughed, smiled, wept, made lovely stir.
Anguish !
One kiss to fee
Wage, take farewell for ever
From that ! All sweet links sever
With the dear past ! So curtly her dismiss !
I never could the sorrow of that kiss
Vanquish I

Death stooped and Sleep
Over her now ;
Stooped as to lift her. Yet they lingered still ;
Inexorably gentle to fulfil



PORTALS OF VISION

Their functions, grief they did awhile allow.

"Mortal,"

In my ear deep

Death murmured, "Render

To grass, earth, flowers what's tender,

Sweet, sacred, but not she. Her soul by this

Hath scaled the ramparts that the walls of bliss

Portal."

"Take me too, Death,

Take me," I cried.

Through his dark wings I breathed that flowery
place,

The rapt Elysian peace of her still face

Seemed to say "Come. 'Tis sweet here. To my side

Hither I"

"Nay I" His cold breath

Chilled and made me shudder,

"Thy yet distressful rudder

Must unaccompanied cut life's sea alone.

Thou art not ripe to reach that world-unknown

Whither.

Above her grave

A little while

Weep if thou wilt, where soon the rose shall laugh,

Oxlips triumphant write her cenotaph.

But her poor earth delay not in exile.

Suffer

Lilies to have

Birth from her beauty.

The marguerites tall do duty

O'er that still mound. There weep. Thy fond regrets,

Tears, memories, to the dreaming violets

Proffer."

The dear still feet,

As thus he spoke,



ORPHIC MYSTERIES

Death lifted. Of his mighty wings (no error
Fools us to fear), the outspread shadowy terror
I felt, the strength. And my heart almost broke
Weeping.

All that was sweet,
Past precious to me,
Death on his pinions gloomy
On argent plumes Sleep took. My soul sank dead.
Gently he lifted her still peaceful head
Sleeping.

Murmuring he stooped
So sweet, so soft,
Toward me, the charm of his world-lulling voice
Drugged for a moment agony : "Rejoice I
Thy love to visit thee shall I bring oft,
Only
Despair not, drooped
O'er dead earth. She, her sweetness
Divine on my wings' fleetness
Shall come to thee." He spoke, and with a shiver
On silver wings was flown, I left for ever
lonely I



PORTALS OF VISION

V

IT CANNOT BE

It cannot be
Rose, violet, lily,
Their crushed life should retain,—
Flowers that recall thy sweetness be ensouled
And thou distil to nothing, thou not hold
Still, through all change, in fee
Inalienable thy being's tenancy ;
Not, through the crush of essence, phial again.

Impossible !
This hollow empty shell,—
How like thy soft, small ear !
Can it the wide sea's whisper, wash and foam,
Ocean's vast life, remember, dimly home ?
Nor thou, dear love, as well
Whorl'd in whatever spiral house sense dwell,
Our past life's haunting music still not hear ?

My frailer eye,
Dim window, can it spy
Through each wet streaming pane
This blurr, life's stormy landscape ? and can thine
From the clerestory of the life divine
Not, though embayed so high,
Catch prospect of my sorrow, memory
To think of those pure diamonds well may stain.

Oh, can a star,
Moonrise or dawn afar,
In this dark hut of clay
Chink crevices of glory, that bright world
Where thou with truth eternal art upfurled ?
Nor thou, dear love, the bar

ORPHIC MYSTERIES

Beat through of utter beauty, things that are,
To reach back to the glimmerings of our day ?

Thou to suggest
Shall memory take such zest,
Almost thy vacant couch
Remoulds thee to my vision, or the stair
Gives me thy shape familiar, thy soft air ?
And thou, dear love, not dressed
Pure substance, thy perfection, at heaven's best
Stream through the old sweet memory, bright
avouch ?

Yes, through my earth
I feel the shadowy birth
In at each spiritual sense
Struggle of thy new beauty ; in surprise
Reel at a hint of those now angel eyes ;
And for thy smile, in dearth
Of sweetness so transcendent of its worth,
To be delivered, yearn with pain intense.



PORTALS OF VISION

VI

HEAVENLY SORROW

Sorrow, heavenly sorrow !
Wake thou in my breast.
It is to rouse thee with the cold gray morrow,
Melancholy, as thou spring'st in the east.

Dawn with secret tremble,
When first pale the skies,
Joy's ancient, still, sweet birth must needs dissemble,
To wake thee, and with thee to sympathise.

Day, her glorious burden
Day, earth's joy, she lingers,
Thee awfully with sad pale smile to guerdon,
Thee, heavenly sorrow, touch with brightening fingers.

Thou on my heart sleeping,
Rude unrestful pillow,
Rock'd on that dreamless wave, in wells of weeping
Did'st drench and steep thee, like a drooping willow.

Over my heart drooping
All night without stir,
Thou in those mournful depths with stars wast stooping
Down with all heaven, for but the dream of her.

There the wild sweet folly
Did'st thou, the sad zest,
Slake of thy holy passion, Melancholy,
To glut thee on the shadowy soft feast.

All night not a glimmer
In those waters black !
Now pales the cold dawn's world-awaking shimmer ;
It shivers through my heart's wave ; oh, awake !

ORPHIC MYSTERIES

Rouse from stagnant languish !
Dawn with Memory
Steals chill to pierce thee into heavenlier anguish,
When wells the old wound up, to bleed in me,

When to waked eyes slowly
Softly dreadful morn
Lets blossom to her dead dear memory wholly
The desolation of its rose forlorn.



PORTALS OF VISION

VII

THE LONELY ROAD

I

For your blithe step I sigh
Gone on the road before me ;
For your warm hand I cry
On life's path rough and stormy.
'Tis weary in wind and rain,
Trudging the open plain,
Moorland and heather ;
'Tis hard against blasts to beat
Lonely without you, sweet ;
No more together I

Under one cloak with me,
Love's warm cloak under,
With you I recked, for glee,
Rain-shower nor thunder.
Reft of your warmth I press
My wrap of loneliness
Shivering round me :
Dead leaves come pattering down
On the bleak way ; all alone
Winter has found me.

II

Lonely of you, my darling,
That heart chill, to hear no more
Your voice like music's oar
Waft on its tones apart
To fairy lands my heart.
'Tis as life's road had in it
Now not a warbling linnet,
Throstle, or starling.

ORPHIC MYSTERIES

You, of song-birds the sweetest,
 Filled the thickets with singing,
And still the sweet notes ringing
 As every moment back
Would bring the voice I lack.
 Sweet notes ! of all sounds now
The mournfullest that thou,
 Echo, repeatest.

The world to silence hollow
 Empty of you is grown,
Since the silver is flown
 Of your fresh voice. Yet all
Of you is musical.
 Is it only fancy's ear
Catches the sound ? I hear
 And long to follow.



PORTALS OF VISION

VIII

FACE, TO MEMORY CLEAR

Face, to memory clear,
That comes to thief me
Into the fancy dear
'Tis your lost eyes I see
Shining once more on me,—
Your very lips I sight
Smiling the old delight !
Dead face, in memory fair,
With the old brow, the old hair
Triumphant ; can you be,
Sweet shadowy witchery !
Only a thing of air
Come to deceive me ?
Only an image vain,
Wrought as a balm for pain,
Mirrored upon the brain,
Only to mock my sense
With shadowy, intense,
Thirst, rapture, then to fade
How like an empty shade !
Then in the present cold,
Heartbroken, lonely and old,
Leave me ?

Whether, O face divine,
A lovely phantom holy,
Out of my brain you shine,
A mind-made thing complete,
Oh, but the creature sweet
Of my heart, of my own
Self-pleasing fancy lone,—
Or whether to the wand,
Sacred spirit, of fond
Compelling thoughts you come,—

ORPHIC MYSTERIES

Real, yourself respond

To melancholy

Sad ardent longings, oh,

Be not an empty show,

Only to come and go I

Beautiful lips approach

And heal me with a touch I

Give but the old sweet kiss,

Cheat with remembered bliss

My folly I



PORTALS OF VISION

IX

THE ETERNAL INFANT

Lord of the lovely pageant,
Maker of night and day,
Is this a theme for glory,
To give and take away ?

I am no thankless ingrate,
Kindler of my life's flame !
I own thee king of bounty,
Thy lavish gifts acclaim.

For thy fair heavens I thank thee,
And thank for thy fresh earth.
I brim with grateful praises
For thy swift gift of birth.

To leave thy blissful bosom
'Tis rich amends to be ;
Thy pageant show of seasons
And days and nights to see.

Awaking from soft slumber
The rare rich things I dreamed,
The rose and the carnation,
To have upon me streamed.

Now better were the silence,
The peace divine and deep,
In dream and tranced vision
Upon thy breast to sleep !

I had not left my slumber
Upon thy cradling breast,
Hadst thou in dreams not shown me
One flower beyond the rest.



ORPHIC MYSTERIES

More sweet than the carnation,
More rich than rose to me.
The flower that gems creation,
Thy flower called Emily.

From her rare sight awaking,
I fretted for the boon,
Life and that flower resplendent ;
I cried to have my moon.

My flower with life thou gavest.
For her love's sake 'twas sweet,
Thy earth, the rain, the roses ;
She made thy gifts complete.

A puppet show of glory,
These were but painted toys.
The princess of the story
She queened my heart and joys.

Together we crowed over
The show, we laughed in chime,
But now it tires and dazzles,
Thy lovely pantomime.

I fret with drowsy eyelids
To hear thy lullaby,
Upon thy cradling bosom
To sleep again I sigh.

A babe, no man of patience,
I were an hypocrite
To say He gives, He taketh
And all He does is right,

O master of the pageant,
Maker of night and day,
Is this a theme for glory,—
To give and take away ?

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PORTALS OF VISION

X

THE WIND IN THE TREES

At the window I lean,
And my heart is a mist.
'Tis a whispering scene,
Where all was whist !
Whist and still was the garden ; but now a breeze
Takes the tree-tops all, the whispering trees ;
Makes of verdure music and shakes dead silence to life,—
O silence that toombs at my heart, without hope, without
strife !

Sighing, the stair
I slowly descend.
Strayed pilgrims so fare
Who roam without end.
Down the ghostly staircase, where her lost tread
Haunts my heart with the music of days that are dead,
My own step daunts me with echoes down through the
gloom,—
O echoing dusk at my heart that aches with her empty
room !

Out in the garden,
Where flowers seem amiss,
I hear it sigh "pardon"
To be what it is.
Swaying, the branches above me seem one long sigh.
O tremulous wash of sound that pauses to die,
They have eased their sad hearts out on the swell of the
breeze,
O tremblings of deep-drawn sighs that hurt and never
give ease.

Sighing, I wonder
Up at green leaves,



ORPHIC MYSTERIES

To see them grow fonder
With the gust that bereaves
On the very breeze that shakes them, which ere it is
done
Robs their lovely thousands, and one by one
Makes them whirl to the ground in yellowing sheaves,—
O gust at whose dance my heart in a passion of
mystery grieves.

Whence has it blown,
Invisible death,
From the blue unknown ?
It is life, it is breath
Unto them ; for the whole bough quivering blows one
way,
Rippling ecstasy takes to dance with the gay,
Unseen freshness, that whirls the drooping foliage,
awake,—
O whirl at my own sad heart that asks to be still and
break !



PORTALS OF VISION

XI

LINES

I sit by the hearthfire lonely,
The vacant armchair by,
And think of the sweet days only
When she who is gone was nigh.

The flame in the dying embers
Flickers with shadowy fall,
And the senseless wood remembers
And glows memorial.

You know what memory's charm is,
Shining mahogany back I
For your stillness softly warm is
With the one thing that I lack.

And my heart from dying ashes
Suddenly flickers aflame
To the glory that abashes
And the hope without a name.

Vividly but for a moment
The air with her is sweet,
Across Time's angry comment
Her eyes and my eyes meet.

Her old gaze shining tender,
That loving look, I see
Reproach me with soft splendour
That I should lonely be.

That sweet gaze spiritual
Fades on my deep desire,
Only a moment's fuel
Kindles to my soul's fire.

ORPHIC MYSTERIES

The wind without is weeping,
Of the churchyard it tells,
Where the daisies are creeping
And the mute earth mournful swells.

The wind in the pine is solemn,
Its great boughs sigh and groan,—
The pine-tree like a column
Upon the hillside lone.

In a patter come the showers ;
Mournfully beats the rain
The landscape blurring, the flowers,
It streams on the window-pane.

I sit by the hearthfire lonely,
Her vacant armchair by,
And think of the sweet days only
When she sat smiling by.



PORTALS OF VISION

XII

LINES

Ah, why so solemn, Memory ?
Her sacred ashes take,
And of adoring sighs and tears
A holy ikon make :

My dead love, as she living were ;
Her breath, her bloom give back,
And with her laughter lily-clear
Appease the lorn world's lack.

Not as through tears I see it shine,
Her beauty back to me
Transfigured, distant, half divine,
Give, weeping Memory,

No, but her old self, laughter-rife,
Arch, mocking, bring me clear !
Stab, sting me with her earthly life,
The wayward sweet of her !



ORPHIC MYSTERIES

XIII

THE AFTERGLOW

"She is here I" to my wild heart I murmur :
I repeat, "It is she, it is she :"
But my wild heart, growing no firmer,
Sighs sadly, "It cannot be I"

O my heart, my wild heart, I answer,
Thy doubtings to certainty hush.
How else should that beautiful dancer,
Hope, through my arteries rush ?

Could'st thou in my bosom be beating
So wildly, if she were not nigh ?
But my heart kept thickly repeating
" 'Tis but a sweet butterfly."

"She is here ! It is she !" in a whisper
I nudge my wild heart to say.
The leaves announce her and lisp her,
And the flowers by their stillness betray.

The lily is white with its wonder ;
Wild rumours the roses apprise.
The doves, they have seen and grow fonder.
Wild heart, believe and have eyes !

The doves in the tree-tops are cooing ;
Abuzz in the lime are the bees.
They are wild her sweet face to be wooing.
What ails thee to doubt and to freeze ?

Awake to each lovely pulsation
Of wings, that ambassadors come
To herald her step ; 'tis elation,
'Tis rapture, where all was now dumb.

PORTALS OF VISION

Rose, canna and lilac, each warden
She left of her memory here,
They know when she walks in her garden.
What ails thee to doubt she is here ?

List not to the whispering treason, —
Misgivings that make thee to start.
Look not through the cold eyes of reason
Through thy wild eyes look, O my heart.

Each pulse-beat thou givest to fancy
Shall ope for thee hundreds of eyes,
To look with the rose and the pansy,
Her unseen presence surprise.

Can all nature have sight to behold her ?
Can the air yearn after and feel,
Nor love, faith, courage be bolder
With keener sense to reveal ?

See, Hope hath her lantern supplied thee,
And Memory hers, from behind.
She is standing, is smiling beside thee
She touches thee, heart. Art thou blind ?

Thy candle of fantasy give me !
Oh, give me the lamplight of dream !
Her sweet face, her figure, believe me,
Heart, my heart, on thy wild eyes shall stream.

She is here. She but waits for our greeting.
Oh, strain to clasp her through air !
Why wildly, my heart, art thou beating
With the hope that consumes despair ?



ORPHIC MYSTERIES

XIV

LINES

Though I be in the shadow still,
And you be in the sun,
Sundering divorce the more endears ;
Division makes us one.

From out the sunshine and the breeze
She to my heart replies,
Silent love-letters wafting me
On wings of butterflies.

Across death's bar infrangible
Upon my cheek I feel
Her kiss with touch intangible
All ache of severance heal.

The wild breeze but her laughter is
To me, her look the star ;
Roses her breathing,—and can she,
Soul of my soul, be far ?



PORTALS OF VISION

XV

THE YELLOW BUTTERFLY

Of all shy visitants, I love
That darling butterfly,
Whose wings are to the cornfield's wave
A hovering reply,

Yellow as dancing wheat-eare ripe
He suns with his gay youth,
And feeds me with the gold of light,
The thrice-tried gleam of truth.

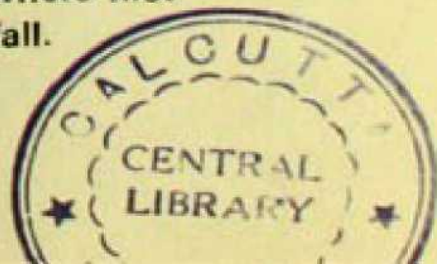
When, glooming back upon myself,
The garden path I pace,
He comes and makes my gladdened eyes
The dial to his grace.

Unfailing omen, punctual sign !
No sooner am I out,
He hovers by on golden wings
To chase the grey of doubt.

All melancholy thoughts to thresh,
Winnow the blissful grain
Of immortality, and sift
From mortal fear and pain.

Day after day the marvel grows ;
Ever his gladsome morn
Shines down the blackness of my grief
With glancing wings of scorn,

Now from the creeper's bowery height,
Now o'er the garden wall ;
From far off places, or where first
The wonder did befall.



ORPHIC MYSTERIES

In that low bed of coxcomb flowers
Beneath her window-sill,
Her chamber-window, where he warms
Homeward my spirit still ;

Or plumb-down from the soaring roof
He to my awful eye
His radiant message angels me
From azure depths of sky.

I cannot with ungrateful heart
Feel God's fair world a blank,
Straight for the sunny thought of her
His yellow wings I thank.

cannot still, her sight to want,
Weep like a thwarted boy,
Cry outright, but with darting gold
He chides me back to joy.

The stupor of the miracle
Ever renewed, the fear,
I lose in charmed tranquility,
For she, my saint, is here.

Who works it ? No dead relic sweet
Of her, my living saint,
Perfect beyond the skill of thought
Or fancy's power to paint.

Whole from her suffering martyrdom
She is arisen. No tomb
Could hold her, no far blissful heaven
Allure. Her heaven is home.

PORTALS OF VISION

No place more holy than these walks,
This garden, where the flowers
Swing censers breathing up to God,
This house a Book of Hours.

No room but memory's sacred hand,
Gilded, illuminante,
Paints how she suffered, loved and died,—
The legend of her fate.

In heaven she is ; beatitude
To her ; her loved ones still,
So loving she, here, here, enskyed
To guard. It is God's will.

Here in the old sweet home where, still
A guardian spirit, she
Heals, comforts, counsels and performs
Her angel ministry.



ORPHIC MYSTERIES

XVI

BUTTERFLY AND HONEY-BEE

Who painted thy wings for a vision, a pageant of summer,
Butterfly gay ?

Who made thee, thou hovering silence forever at play ?
The bee, that dainty hummer,

Sings at his trade, his task, in the blossoms of May.
Sober in yellow and black, a labourer surly,

His song is earnest to mind us of winter's dark day,—
Never a moment to lose, but late and early

Honey to make, hive sweetness, is all his care.
But thou that effortless floatest on Zephyr's commotion,
Butterfly fair,

Who made thee to paint our eyes with the music of motion.
Idle, disdainfully gorgeous, a pageant of air ?

He who the labouring bee made social and busy,
Butterfly bright !

Made thee a show and a picture in toil's despite,
Thou of the wing's back dizzy
Lovely dancer, makest thy scorn and delight,
From flower to shaken flower thou quivering feedest,
With warmth art drunken, with sunshine, this glory of light.

Thou of dark days no forethought takest, nought heedest,
Save for honey to rock the jonquil, the harebell tease,
Who made thee in sorrow's derision a pulse-beat of pleasure.
Flower of the breeze ?

To flaunt thy beauty and float, all pastime, all leisure,
As joy, thought, life were eternal and could not cease.

Ah, he works for the hive, a murmuring nation,
The grave honey-bee,

Earnest, absorbed and tasked and sombre is he.
The straight line without elation,

Humming he goes from wallflower to peony ;
Honey he makes for others, his life is duty.
But thou, what secret of joy that buoyancy free

PORTALS OF VISION

Gave, that reckless disdain of all but beauty ?
 Only thy mate in the blossoms to chase and to kiss !
 Ah, it is love, it is love, that gives thee thy valiance
 Of fluttering bliss,
 Ever to ride the sunshine triumphant in dalliance,
 Sorrow and death and winter forever to miss.

He who made so solemn the sky and the mountains,
 All things that stand
 Founded and fixed everlasting, unspeakably grand,
 He who the fields, fresh fountains
 Framed, and the haughty expanses of sea and land,
 He who the pensive night made, mystical, balmy,
 Steal down over earth and the silence spanned,
 Made in heaven the stars his inscrutable army
 Shining, the ancient stars, our ignorance wall,—
 He painted thy wings for a signboard, a festival vision,
 Butterfly small,
 To win and banquet our eyes in sorrow's derision,
 Showed in thy joy his secret, the key to it all.

In joy, in joy he works ; and we, his creatures,—
 Bee, butterfly, man,—
 Share his brooding bliss in varying span ;
 All we, but features
 Of the prime Love divine, blazon his plan.
 Not without joy he gathers, the luscious recruiter,
 Honey ambrosial, yellow, 'gainst winter's ban :
 Not without love is he though sexless, a neuter,
 Nectar to hoard for others, the bee hive's slave.
 Such deep strength of duty, affection sober,
 Honey-bee brave,
 Prescient of falling leaves and rainy October,
 Spark of his own world-love to thee he gave.
 I, like the toiling bee, I too, a poet,
 From flower to flower,
 Gather delicious honey, my thought's rich dower,
 For time to show it ;
 Hive in the hearts of men 'gainst winter's power ;

ORPHIC MYSTERIES

To feed the world's deep thought I ply my earnest
Social labour. But, oh, like thee to tower
Up on the blast unanxious, thou fire that burnest
In love and gaiety up all dread of cold !
Love and the moment are thine. Thou lover immortal,
Butterfly bold !
Hast learnt to dream away through the ice-king's portal,
Hoarfrost and sleet and snow, in a brown shell rolled.

Fearless a worm thou cam'st from the primal rapture,
When Chaos, Night,
Were not, for God had spoken "Let there be light."
Thou, but a worm, did'st capture
Then thy knowledge mysterious and sovereign delight ;
Winter and night thou knewest to be for a season,
Night but anchors for thee thy argosy bright,
Moors thee till morn shall come. And winter hath reason ;
Gives thee a brooding-time in thy gold brown lair.
There those wonderful sails in a dream thou weavest,
Ship of the air,
Provident thou of joy, such lightness thievest
To float upon breeze and distance, disdainful of care.

Never a fear thou knowest. Thy sister vessel,
Gallant and fine,
Is she not with thee ? I weep, "Had I but mine !"
My sighs to wrestle,
Frigate of joy and beauty that mockest tear-shine,
Thou in a lovely swerve by me dost hover,
Angel of His compassion, His ship of the line,
And thy far-winged hail dost fling me : "Lover,
Weep not ! She sucks the honey of endless joy
On God's side of the sunshine, where life is laughter,—
Thy heart upbuoy !
She sips in the rose of glory. Come, follow after ;
May, June, are there eternal and never can cloy."



PORTALS OF VISION

XVII

THE BLACK SWALLOW-TAIL BUTTERFLY

Beautiful dancer upon the wind of the life in thy fluttering wings,
O mingle of breeze and sunlight, whose glancing gaiety sings
Of the heavenly life, and my soul on the verge of invisible
things !

Heavy but now I wandered my garden of melancholy.
Sad as a clod was my heart and meaningless, trivial, a folly
Past speaking, earth and sky and water and winds at volley ;

Left lonely of thee, the light of tha air, with thy presence
unillumed,
Cold was the sunlight's glory, as dawn had perished unbloomed :
A mournful pall was the day and all things in darkness entombed.

Mute of thy voice an echo, an echo despairing and hollow.
Sound but seemed in thy tones, thou life of music to follow,
Beauty, whose warm sun thou wast, had after thee gone like
a swallow.

Dead was the beautiful shiver of leaves, and the lovely swaying
of flowers ;
Dead without pride man's beauty, his motion, the something
that towers.
Like a dead leaf I drifted, a dream in the noontide hours.

She has taken with her rustle, the movement and the shimmer,
The glide and the dart of birds and the woodland's dusking
glimmer :
Life was the ripple of her ; the fire in things turns dimmer.

For she was the charm and the mystery, the magic of it all,
Earth's secret soul of delight : She is gone beyond recall !
And autumn demurs to linger and wanes and crisps to the fall.

Only of her deserted, the sole thing left unwilling,
Behind her I hesitate, some desolate fate fulfilling ;
In the yellowing fall I linger and wait for the winter's chilling.



ORPHIC MYSTERIES

When shall I go too, and be housed in thy ashes' sympathy,
With dust and silence entomb, this rusting anchor free,
Wreck and sunder, descend to the blissful nothing of thee ?

For nothing, I think, but slumber awaits us there, nor a vernal
Visiting wind shall reach us ; a sleep, a silence eternal ;
Since nothing returns of thee, not a breath, not a hint supernal.

Oh, could aught, if the soul survived, from my longing hold
thee apart,
To thy love's visiting sweetness should I not suddenly start,
Leap to a ghost of thy grace and fold thee to my heart ?

As thus I spoke despairing, a beautiful apparition
Hovered and glanced in my path, a wingèd glory, a vision
That mocked me on fluttering wings and held me up to derision.

Large black wings, I knew them once, streaked white o'er the
swallow-tail,
Wings on the air's wide ocean me, lonely voyager, hail,
Whence and whither, O frigate of beauty crowded with sail ?

Once or twice I have seen thee, a flash, for a moment hover
On a gust of thy buoyant reserve, and ere my heart could recover
That shock of enchanted surprise, the vision, the glory was over.

But now before me undismayed, as if some thing should restrain
That shy proud fear of my presence to hover away in disdain,
Fluttering close I saw thee, thou sail of the distance, remain.

Breathless I stood and fearful, in my wonder softly enchanted.
To and fro it fluttered to the flower-bush she had planted,
The flower called King of Fragrance with her holy memory
haunted.

To and fro and back again ! The beautiful life of its wings
Shook out my crumpled soul : wild thinkings, imaginings,
Stirred delighted and conscious from a yearning blackness
of things.

PORTALS OF VISION

My spirit, wintering sadly in a brown despair of nature,
Stirred in its dream of death, shook off its eyeless disfeature,
In a fluttering sympathy woke and danced with that beautiful
creature.

In and out of the branches green, then down it fluttered aswoon
To sit on the fern Himalayan, outspread reposing ; but soon
Held its large black wings to the languid afternoon.

That flaunting plume of verdure her own white hands had
planted :
There it sat, nor stirred. What magic wand had enchanted
The splendour on wings to sit where her holy memory haunted ?

Oh, could it know my dark despair ? as an angel of pity
have come,
That glory of breeze and distance, with my heavy heart to home,
As a blessed sign of her persence to lift the pall from the tomb ?

Sombre and melancholy, yet fretted with silver, 'tis sitting,
One streak of hope, all else with my own black sorrow fitting.
Upshut, scarce visible, not a stir, not a dream of flitting.

In a soft wonder hushed I stood—a trance, a stupor of awe.
With my whole soul I was seeing, through the pores of my
body I saw,
And felt my frost-bound spirit to her sunny presence thaw.

Life re-woke, stir, motion. An unforgettable sweetness
Hovered and fluttered within to my pulses' newborn fleetness.
Without me the world had winged from a trance of
incompleteness.

For she, the charm and the mystery, the magic of it all,
Earth's secret soul of delight, she had touched the
yellowing fall
With rustle and movement and shimmer ; she had come
back at a call :



ORPHIC MYSTERIES

Sound and sunshine and beauty at a touch, an admonition
Had burst their chrysalis sleep. At that glory, that apparition,
Life, the ripple of her, emerged, a newborn vision,

Vivid immortal, airy, a wondrous vision on wings !
Elate and cumberless, the fire that smouldered in things
Burnt up with her from ashes to be the silence that sings,

The floating flower in the air that dances for ever vernal,
All wings, a bodiless flutter, the symbol of life eternal,
A mingle of breeze and sunshine, glad Psyche, the winger
supernal.

Scarcely alighting ever from flower to shaken flower,
On quivering wings she feeds ; or if she rests, for an hour
Will sit in utter repose in the stirlessness of power.

For she is the soul's own sister : and life but a sweet emotion,
Like her, a pulsing thought, through the bliss of things,
the ocean,
Hovers, of being and beauty, or quiverless rests from motion.

You, too, rest, O my dead love, upon wings immortal alit
Here in the old sweet garden that was our life, to sit
Invisible, folded up ; you cannot and will not flit

Till the breeze that is God and morning awake us to soar
together
Through other gardens of unknown time and God's eternal
weather,
Since life is the soul's vast voyage and death but a moment's
tether.

Unalighting, lost in repose, the glorious worlds that roll,—
Each and all I saw in a flash to a winged thing ensoul
Our earth, too, a mothlike creature that hovers on either pole.



PORTALS OF VISION

XVIII

BUTTERFLY WINGS

Lifted on butterfly wings to the summit of my being,
Ushered to some strange life that is immortality,
Slowly from vision I sink, those rapt clear heights of seeing,
Life, poor ransacked life, to the empty grey of thee.

Darkness that seized the world on my bosom has descended
Even as night through air it hurries and circles fast,
That voyage ethereal through the truth of things is ended,
On the bleak shores of sense in shipwreck I am cast.

'Tis as Psyche herself should the chrysalis re-enter,
Undream her glorious wings to the caterpillar back,
How shall my beggared soul on common things concentrate
Heavenly reality once glimpsed again to lack ?

O solid unchanging world, is it you then that are real ?
I see the moving street, the trees, the garden, the house ;
And yet but now in a dream, in a rapture hymeneal
My spirit seemed herself, her sweet self, to espouse.

Light has ebbed from the air, and once more disenchanted
Aches to be void of her the garden that now so sweet,
Even now remembering, from each rose she had planted
Seemed but to breathe and be with her loveliness replete.

It is resting still I know that angel of the distance,
Resting, the beautiful wings that gave me another sky ;
But now with heavy heart I dare not make resistance
To some cold voice that says 'tis a painted butterfly.

Sadly I mount the stairs. I hear in the empty verandah,
Empty of her, the sound of singing and music cease.
I see her vacant chair that sadly seems to demand her,
All things lean and listen : she nowhere breathes or is.

Someone comes to meet me. It is that maiden sheeny,
Motherless, mournful face that ever speaks of a lack ;

ORPHIC MYSTERIES

I brighten perforce my look to comfort Mrinalini,
Heavy despair within me mounts, but I press it back.

Of the butterfly I tell her, the messenger come from Bramha
Prajapati on wings emerged from the dark of him
Tidings sweet to give of mother. I strive to balm her
Girlish grief with a hope that in my heart flickers dim.

"You know, dear, 'tis God's envoy from whom it did inherit
Glorious wings, yet dreamed and died in a chrysalis.
Well, it has come to say she is here, your mother's spirit,
Her angel self through death has bloomed to a glory like this.

It flew, it hovered before me unfearing, the gorgeous creature
And now 'tis resting ; its beauty the anchoring wings upbuoy
On the fern that your dear mother planted." Her every feature
Listens delight and hope and wonders a lovely joy.

I look at the radiant face. And can it be, I mutter,
Her mother's unseen presence throws on her face that shine
Or the credulous sweet faith of girlhood all I utter
Simply to take in to her childish heart divine.

O trustful, adorable, dear tender-hearted maiden
You live, I cry, in a hush, the morning calm of the soul
Ere all those dreadful truths that life and mystery trade in
And the tomb's hopeless lid, death, on your spirit roll.

With a groan I crush my heart in my hand as it were I crumple
Frail, resurging hopes, my butterfly-fancies away
I toss like bits of paper, the dear illusion trample
That mocks with a phantom rose the stern cold light of day.



PORTALS OF VISION

XIX

THE SUNRISE AND RIVULET

Hope in the sunrise flushes and flames, it burns
on upland and lea.

Laughter wells out of the rock in a gush of gaiety.

From blind and fearful night

My soul, too, rises and flushes,

And the body's rock in delight

It bubbles, escapes and gushes.

The sanguine soul of the day may hope, it has ever
behind it the night.

And the clear, wild laughter of water from grey hills
leap in delight.

Mountained with mystery

I pool and pause and quiver,

With night and infinity

O'ershadowed darken and shiver.

Tis as the sunrise should be caught in a cloud of
perishing flesh.

Tis as the laughter of water in dull veins should
emmesh.

Therefore the 'wither and whence' ?

And the noonday's garish folly,

Dawn's cold indifference

And the sunset's melancholy.

In brief and pensive horizons I see the sun's flame
die ;

The rivulet pent in my veins can but dream of an
infinite sky.

It breaks over rock and stone

And fitfully catches the azure,

With dusk and evening I brown

Nor the sun's great girdle measure.

Sun of my heart thou art sunk from sight who brought'st
me gladness and day ;



ORPHIC MYSTERIES

Brook that danced beside me what river hath caught
thee away ?

For thy voice I hasten below
Lost in some sister valley ;
In thy memory's after glow
I darken fast, nor can rally.

Suns of the great world may relume and rivulets meet
once more

But soul from soul once parted what dawning ? And O,
what shore ?

Thence the 'wherefore and why' ?
And the music yearning and plaining
And the silence that is a sigh
And the heart in mystery paining.

Silence and mystical night and the cold stars high
o'erhead ;

A shuddering stream I wander with fear enforested.
I turn and bend for thee, love,
In a darkness rustled with terror
And the bright keen stars above
Smile at my edging error.

Dawn of my sky when wilt thou flush ? O my sister
rivulet

Thy voice must I remember to lose and to forget ?
Yet every winding I make
In a ring to thee shall wed me,
Each star I overtake
To thy paling soft hath sped me.

Not a moving fire but trembles above to the sure warm
flush of thee ;

Not a fretting drop but channels to meet thy whispering
sea.

Yet O the 'whether or no' ?
And the silence deep and daunting
And the doubt that is a blow
And the one thing ever wanting.



PORTALS OF VISION

XX

DEATH AND LOVE

A Dialogue

"Come, Nothingness
Blank and Negation, Nescience, mighty Death,
Anihilation, or whatever else
Men do miscall thee, thou that loss of breath
And being seem'st, terrifically to dress
Thy aspect to each dark mind-muffling fear
That in man's spirit dwells,
Come, for I will disprove thee, show thou art
A self-made phantom of man's fearful heart.
Thou shalt from me extort not one sad tear
To weep the invisible triumphant dead.
She waits me, that divine, dear, shining head."

"Dupe of thy hope
Shallow love-cheated mortal, I am Death.
Behold me, I am nothingness. Revive
One of the millions then that my dart slayeth ;
Thou that hast challenged me, say, canst thou cope
With these terrific arrows ? Then renounce
All hope that she can live.
Thou saw'st her borne unto the river side,
Burnt on the pyre, her ashes scattered wide.
In reason's mere despite to play the dunce
'Gainst proof of eyes and ears be dreamer, fool
Who was it ta ught thee, in what shallow school ?"

"Immortal Love
Who made his heaven and home in her fair eyes,
I learnt in that bright college. He it was
Taught me thy muffled menace to despise ;
In this faith grammared me, that thou wouldst prove
The shadow of a shadow. Substance thou
Hast none, nor shape canst show

ORPHIC MYSTERIES

An unsubstantial terror. Thee God made
From our projected ignorance, afraid
Of its audacity, to have us bow
To his slow earthly schooling. Therefore he
Heaven's brightness hid with thy dark nullity."

"Heaven's brightness ? Dolt I
And where's that fancied brightness thy vague heaven ?
All worlds I rule. And nothing is so strong,
Such power to my imperious stride is given,
'Gainst me can shut the bolt,
Offer to me resistance, the prime law
And nature's mere necessity. Lest throng,
Lest insane superfluity should Earth,
The many-breasted mother, crush with birth
I with my emptying quiver over-awe,
God's sane inexorable archer, Death,
Who roomy keep the populous fields of breath."

"Twas Heaven to fill,
Heaven, vast Eternity, whence forms and clouds
Life's pageantry forever, thou wast given
Those darts tremendous. Therefore crowds on crowds
Slay, harry, thou wast suffered. Haste to kill,
Admit us to the brightness ; people Heaven.
She dwells there where truth cores the universe.
'Tis everywhere. Behind the breeze it lies,
Behind the sunshine to our thwarted eyes.
Eternal Love eclipses there thy curse
And joins all parted lovers. Thou, his thrall,
Art but the gateway to his glorious all."



PORTALS OF VISION

XXI

LINES

Where in the desolate blank of things, this utter vanish of thee
Love shall I seek thee, hollow sky, green earth or whispering sea ?

What rife depth, O what distance
With thy sweet presence thrills
The coral cathedraled ocean
The silver rooted hills ?

Thou who wast music, to whose voice nor bird, breeze, water but
sings,

Somewhere surely I know thou art in the infinite rhythm of things.
For where in the symphony total
That quivers with thee, the note
Shall I find, the one sweet cadence,
The key to thy charm remote ?

Now in the secrecy of dew I shiver with soft surprise,
Love, thy tremulous lips to catch and dove-like flutter of eyes.
But roses red of thy sweetness
Fail, of thy pureness the white,
All fair things lack completeness
To gate thee to the light.

Yet with thy soul I am haunted so, the something loving, divine ;
Flared by the awful pyre, I linger for thee and pine.
Somewhere shall this great ocean,
Life where I lost thee, sweet,
By whose vast roar I wander,
Wash thee up at my feet.

Therefore the moonrise breathless I watch, I hang upon sunset's fire :
Sometime shall day and the circling hours return me my heart's desire.
Morn in its girdle of roses,
Eve in its starlit hair,
Somewhere my soul's truth waits me,
O I shall leap to her there.



ORPHIC MYSTERIES

XXII

THROUGH THE BREATH OF THE ROSE

"'Tis a garden lost and lonely, where flowers blow not, or but
prone

Stoop and droop or half dispetal on those garden walks so fair,
That fair garden once enchanted with the dream, the bloom of her,
Flowers in sad remembrance only lingering dream who once was
there."

So to me my heart in anguish. Round I look and see how
languish

Orphaned of her smile the lilies, pansies disinherited ;
Shadows of the ghosts of roses pine and mourn in every bed ;
And my heart bleeds, nor can vanquish sighs that come and tears
unprayed.

Ah, how my chilled thoughts grow sober, crisp and wither, "'Tis
October

A few weeks and never Autumn such dead leaves so brown to see
Scattered as where past they carried, dear, through thy sad
garden thee ;

Ah, with new leaves spring shall robe her green and fresh on
every tree.

But I know my lone November shall pass on to bare December,
New-born March nor cheerful April through this garden any more
Budded back to life shall give me her whom all things here
deplore ;

Her lost face but to remember, 'tis that I the past implore.

Vain your sympathy, sad roses. On that sigh my sorrow closes
I but seek my spirit's hunger with her memory to stay
I must bring for sightless craving shadows of her to the day
Every dear spot where reposes her lost footing must I pray."

Down the garden walk I wander, and "'Twas here, this plot,"
I ponder,

PORTALS OF VISION

"Where the grass, a mist of verdure, hid the daisies, here or here
Where the marigolds in glory glowed so warm." A springing tear
Drops, and straight the sweet spot fonder in my heart I re-
insphere.

"Here", I say ; yet standing tremble and my fear can scarce
dissemble,
The sweet past I let so lightly glide from happy day to day
No deep stamp of her can give me grief's sad earnest to repay,
Nothing that shall her resemble, nothing half so fresh and gay.

Only from the mint where sorrow hath engraved her grief can
borrow
The dear image love and anguish in a mould that cannot crack
Fixed her features. Yet I linger half afraid from ail and wrack
Through my heart to drive the furrow that shall bloom remembra-
nce back.

Thus with the dear past I dally nor through any port dare sally
Till to nerve me I an odour breathe through damp decay and death
From the rose her own hand planted, its voluptuous soul of breath
With a wavering "Shall I ? Shall I ?" Soon I stand the bush
beneath.

To my nostrils then I pull it, through my aching sense ensoul it,
Take the long drawn "ah," of fragrance sweet as 'twere a spirit
sigh
From my lost rose breathing of her, as 'twere she and standing by ;
To my heart's core I inhale it, drink that wine of memory.

O rare draught ! Can it inspirit, wine of memory inherit
From past vintages such glory ? "Tis enchantment !" I exclaim,
"Though her magic wand be willing, can she from a murmured
name
From a flower's breath earn such merit through my pulse to dart
like flame."

For I seem as, grown immortal, through that rose's breathing
portal



ORPHIC MYSTERIES

Out into some fadeless garden to have stept ; I feel bewitch
My stirred thoughts with things remembered something new and
rare and rich
Not through memory's escortal seemed I there my tent to pitch.

But as hope and courage guiding through some secret panel
sliding,
I the soul's enchanted garden stept upon, prepared and planned
By death, love and burying sorrow, that eternal fairy land
Where with her in bliss abiding life for ever more shall stand.

Marvelling I muse and wonder how sane reason could so blunder
Custom, daylight, sense be silent, pull not back or I not hear ?
Could my soul, her ancient warders sleeping found, herself
insphere
From habitual things asunder sweetly to have wandered here ?

Or have we strange other senses spiritual whose daily fences
At an odour's touch may, breaking, leave soul, body shivering
In a world whose novel glory seems the fledge of some fair wing
Sheathed within us yet in trances of the soul's growth feathering ?

Even as thus I stood astonished and my loneliness admonished
Suddenly a hand familiar in my own I felt entwine
Whose soft warmth and gentle pressure stilled all fearfulness in
mine,
From my heart all terror vanished. Her dear face it was divine,

Smiling with a soft insistence, taking from my soul resistance
Such sweet dread as might have shook me to be standing her
beside.

All seem'd natural and simple even as tho' she had not died,
Not a shock of dread or distance felt I, "Love 'tis you," I cried,

"Standing all this while so near me." Then half startled, "Dear
me, dear me,

What a dreadful dream my darling, was I dreaming all this while,
O what sweet relief to waken, wake and see you stand and smile
Still its memory, I fear me, yearns my heart with sad exile."



PORTALS OF VISION

Simply as of old she kissed me, "Love" she said, "have you dismissed me

From your thoughts so wide asunder and from truth to dream me dead ?

I have been here waiting for you, waiting till the false dream fled,
Waiting love, till you should tryst me, kiss me fresh awakenèd."

Then she smiled again. The glory did repeat its shining story
And her whole face blazed resplendent joyfully angelical ;
From my eyes unscaled in vision, in bright vision dropped and fell
Flaking like a dream that's hoary, the sad past terrestrial.

"O this paradisal seeming I am I dead or am I dreaming ?
This is heaven and you immortal, you an angel have outspread
Blissfully the soul's fledge hither. Death is nothing then," I said,
"Heaven is where the heart is," beaming she replied, "You are not
dead,

Nor in dreams. Awake, immortal, even as I the rose gates portal
Fragrance that the soul's emotion quickens and I standing by
From the body's gross delusion of a death that cannot die
I with my warm hand's escortal witchèd you to reality,

Into sunshine out of shadow. This is no Elysian meadow,
Look, it is the old sweet garden !' "So it is, it is," I cried,
"And the dear old house familiar dressed in weeds of memory
Like our past life's mourning widow, 'tis enchantment ! standing by.

Yet to my thought what so strange is this tall city of the Ganges
Is it, can it be Calcutta ? Soaring round us palaces
Piled up to the clouds as cloudlike, this ethereal throng and press
Up in air of columned ranges, domes and towers and terraces

Coloured bright, such architecture as can fear nor stain nor fracture
Hovering in air eternal as in some warm sunset flush
High in clouds see diamonds sparkle distantly and rubies blush,
Here of pearl the long erecture ; some pearl city of the hush

Not of earth. And yet that steeple, O and who this glorious
people



ORPHIC MYSTERIES

Floating, hovering around it ? 'Tis St. Thomas's", I said,
 "Where so sweetly peals the anthem. Yet a holier mass is said
 There where hark what glories ripple, music that might wake the
 dead.

Cadences of sound harmonious swelling to be merged sympho-
 nious

With vast interstellar music, spherul chimes that meet the ear,
 Such as wash into oblivion all that jars our mortal sphere,
 Cancel as a thing erroneous doubt and death and hate and fear."

"That", she said, "the tidal splendour is of all tones grand or
 tender

All that live and love in chorus in that sound to God aspire
 From all spheres, nay, Titans, demons, lost archangels sing in fire
 Join its symphony, surrender rage and pride to hear it lyre.

Scarcely our composers ape it or our painters sculptors shape it
 In those temples and those churches yonder. What think you of
 them ?"

Lost in awe I stood, such glories, domes and towers a diadem,
 Girdled me. In words to drape it, in faint words, I might not dream.

Scarce I trust my eyes, the vision trembled so in apparition
 Fearful lest the sight should vanish, to her small soft hand I clung
 Its affectionate warm pressure faith to my sad heart-beats sung
 Out from the wavering collision calm once more the splendour
 hung.

With a lovely smile from durance she released to reassurance
 Doubts and fears that still tormented me the body's prisoner,
 "Love", she said, "no fairy glamour witches you. They do nor stir,
 For solidity, endurance made those glories built in air.

'Tis the spiritual city where for works of love and pity
 We the new to life inhabit, we you wrongly call the dead.
 To reality awakened there we eat the heavenly bread."

"What and drink ye still and eat ye from the flesh escaped and
 fled ?"

(Unfinished)



PORTALS OF VISION

XXIII

LINES

In the night, the lonely watches
I weep and sigh for thee,
Till great stars, wet and streaming
Look down and pity me.

My strong sobs break the stillness,
God's awful nightly hush,
Against his star-thronged distance
My lonely heart I crush,

I vex eternal silence
To sing me back my bliss,
Jarred with the spheral music
One little voice to miss.

One gaze, for all those millions
That sparkling shine and fill
With joy God's boundless yearning,
One smile, my ache would still.

So through the nightly watches
I weep, and sigh for thee
And cold stars wet and streaming
Look down and pity me.



ORPHIC MYSTERIES

XXIV

THE STAR ANGEL

As up at God's great silence
I looked with streaming eyes,
A star through my tears came trembling
Glittering down from the skies.

Trembling with pity eternal,
Shining with steadfast peace;
That angel of the silence
Hushed me and bade me cease.

"Cease, for thy falling tear drops
Have dimm'd the eternal eyes,
And thy heart-rending sorrow
Disturbs heaven's harmonies.

Thou canst not pierce with grieving
The austere, awful hush,
Around whose central stillness
The stars in myriads rush.

Thou canst not win with weeping
From the bosom of vast repose
Her resting soul, nor trouble
His calm whom we enclose.

Round whom our angel armies
Wheel, and with solemn awe,
Make with our heavenly motions
The music that is law."

Trembling with pity eternal,
Peaceful, I hear him speak ;
And with fresh tears fast welling
I wet his glistening cheek.



PORTALS OF VISION

"Return, nor tremble with pity,—
Return, and shine in peace,
Thou glorious star that streamest
Through my tears without cease.

Resume thy austere function,
Law and the swerveless chime,
Whose marshalled order and motion
Preserves the world's fresh prime,

What ails thee through a tear drop
A mortal tear to stream,
To break thy glory and tarnish
With our salt sorrow's gleam ?

I ask not back with weeping
From infinite distance and rest,
God's starry silence, the frailty
That bathed in His calm were best.

I crave not thy bright comfort,
Cold star, my tears should steep
And hush my wild heart's throbbing,
I only ask to weep.

To think and to remember,
With tears how she was sweet
And life how briefly blissful
With her awhile to beat."

Wildly, through tears I answered
His angel cheek I stained ;
Yet streaming the pity eternal
Through my tears he remained.

"Why stay'st thou ? Can thy brilliance
Have caught the tremble, the pain,
And the glide of all stars lingered
With my grief to remain ?

ORPHIC MYSTERIES

Through a tear's terrestrial tremble
To wait and weep with me
Hast thou from steadfast rapture
Stooped, from tranquillity ?

Forsook, perhaps to grieving,
The severe awful hush,
Around whose central silence
The constellations rush.

Of all the glories of distance
That never an eyelid drooped,
Nor paused for a tear terrestrial
Thou only, hast thou stooped.

I cannot move with weeping
The bosom of starry bliss
In whose eternal keeping
Her restful spirit is.

I cannot with the tremble
Of a frail terrestrial tear
Persuade her transcèd stillness
In grief to re-insphere.

Persuade from infinite distance
A moment, it may be,
Through my tears' useless streaming
To look and think of me ;

To think and to remember,
In the bosom of vast repose
Where like a star she glitters,
My grief for her, my throes ;

Caught in a tear's wet tremble
To dim and to fill with me
And streaming the old sweet pity
Stoop from infinity.



PORTALS OF VISION

Then in my eye soft gazing
Through tears that well and fill,
To touch me and to whisper :
'Grieve not, I love thee still.' "

So wept I ; through my weeping
Larger I saw him shine ;
Kindly his streaming fingers,
That bright star, laid in mine.

"Nay, hush thee ; for thy tear-drops
Have a million starry eyes
Drenched through, and the calm eternal
Is troubled with thy sighs.

The boundless bosom to hear thee
Is moved, and to soothe thy strife
Let stream the peace and the distance
Through the broken tremble of life,

Out from the infinite wheelings,
From everlasting awe,
The swerveless dance, whose motions
Make harmony and law.

One calm eye of the millions,
Spectators of earth's pain
That have looked and swept for ages
On through the glittering plain ;

Guards of the world's great order,
The sheen and the array,
Patrols of space ethereal
From tarnish and decay ;

I, angel of his pity
Lo, I am sent thy woes
To share, thy grievous weeping
To comfort and compose.

ORPHIC MYSTERIES

Lay thy head on my bosom
Still thee upon my breast
Taste of the starry silence,
Sink to our heavenly rest."

With gentle human accents
Softly he spoke ; it bred
Strange wonder warming through me ;
Yet I, un comforted,

Answered : "Thou alien splendour,
Return ; thou canst not share,
Kind tranquil star, my weepings,
Who knowest not grief or care.

Hadst thou some sister glory
Lost from the peace of the skies,
Then might'st thou comfort whisper,
Then might'st thou wipe my eyes.

Let me divine compassion,
God's patience, let me move,
To burst death's awful barrier
And send me her I love ;

Through a tear's terrestrial tremble
To wait and weep with me,
To part my hair and to whisper,
A moment it may be,

'Dear, from the infinite distance
I love thee, I am not cold ;
From space toward thee I tremble,
I love thee as of old.

On the bosom of bliss eternal
I yearn to think of thee ;
I dim in transcended brightness
Thy far off pain to see.'

PORTALS OF VISION

She sees not, will not hear me ;
Then, glorious star, return ;
Nor the glide of all heaven linger,
But let my salt tears burn."

Then with a strange emotion,
Pulsing my words to hear,—
They were not the pulsations
Of aught so cold or clear—

That glorious star he clasped me,
He strained me tenderly
To his distant breast, that I wondered
And wept to think it she.

In the clasp of pity eternal,
Severe, sweet, heavenly,
For bliss and awe I trembled,
Whispering, 'Is it she ?'

I fell on his angel bosom,
I wept for joy ; his gaze
Softening with tender glory,
My whole soul did amaze.

I yearned up to those features,
Severe, sweet, heavenly,
"Tis thou, "I sobbed in whispers,
"Emily, Emily I"

"Hush I" 'Twas her own sweet accents,
And yet angelical ;
I heard, with human tremble,
Her faltering accents fall.

"Hush I On the bosom eternal
I suffered, of thee to think,
I dimmed in tranced brightness,
On rapture's awful brink.

ORPHIC MYSTERIES

From God's conceiveless glory
Turning, from bliss away,
From peace, toward thee I trembled
And thy tormented clay.

Through thy tears' sorrowing tremble,
As thou didst gaze on high,
I, on a glittering star beam,
Stooped from infinity.

Not till thou looked'st upward
To crush thy suffering clay
Against God's star-thronged distance,
Could I to thee find way,

To soothe thee and to comfort.
God is no silence cold ;
The smallest star in the vastness
Burns with a love untold.

It trembles with pity eternal,
It moves with blissful awe,
In the love-linked dance, whose motions
Are harmony and law.

Not one but earthward gazing
To meet a teardrop, still
With God's own bright compassion
Must dim, suffuse and fill,

Must make a glittering stairway
For that large sympathy,
Whence came the world, to brighten
Down to a sorrowing eye.

To shun eternal comfort
In nature be not fond,
To the pity in the grandeur
Through brightened tears respond.

PORTALS OF VISION

With all things, in the vastness
He suffers, He weeps as we,
In the mist, the falling dewdrop,
The rain on flowers and tree.

The cloud is but His sadness,
The sunset but His grief,
In the homeless wind He wanders
And moans without relief.

In the weeping life of water
He channels and frets and groans,
He petrifies and freezes
In the tearless heart of stones.

With every poor worm trampled
He dies, the deathpang tastes,
No mateless she-bird mourneth
But to her side He hastes.

The glories of the distance
That seem so cold and high,
They are the eyes of mercy
To see creation by.

All day, unseen, they glitter,
Clear all night long they shine,
That infinite Compassion
May gaze, and Love divine.

Then mourn since God's self sorrows,
Suffer, for suffering is
The law by which love strengthens,
Increases, burns toward bliss.

Yet be not lonely in sorrow,
Not selfish be. Let share
The starry all thy weeping,
To vastness lift thy care.

ORPHIC MYSTERIES

The illimitable bosom
That all contains, to all
Yearns out of space and distance,
Feels though a sparrow fall.

How infinitely lonely,
Think, in His vastness he,
To mix Himself and limit
In man and bird and tree.

He aches to be unbounded ;
Ever alone, He seeks
Some shore to burst the glory ;
On human hearts He breaks.

Sparkling with life eternal
By bay, creek, rocky shelf,
Foaming eternal freshness,
He seeks to spend Himself

On all life. Tree, man, creature,
We are the lonely shores
His lonelier vast sets tidal
Towards, and heaves and roars.

Ever toward all existence
Those mighty waters move,
On limit to break their grandeur
And wet with streaming love.

Me like a shell His glory
Washed from thy side away,
An oyster to pearl in His freshness,
Depths fathomless to day.

Thou as a clinging sea-weed
Upon thy rock must weep,
Yet be with His grandeur lifted,
Suffer to sway and to steep



PORTALS OF VISION

'Thy drenched heart, His pity
Drink infinitely sweet,
God's love, divine compassion,
Nor 'gainst His vastness beat."

I felt her starry beauty
Softly unparadise
From me that angel clasping,
I looked with streaming eyes.

With fond tears I besought her,
I sought to stay her back,
"God's bosom shall not miss thee
A little while to lack."

"Nay, hush thee. Through the tremble
Of a frail terrestrial tear
Have I not wept and waited ?
Have I not soothed thee, dear ?"

Upon my brow she kissed me,
On my cheek a tear let fall.
She left me wildly weeping,
Left me without recall.

I dashed away those waters,
I gazed but nought might see,
Only a star in the distance
Was shining quietly.

ORPHEUS—*Choric Odes*

THE AWAKENING OF ORPHEUS

High dawn with early shine
On Rhodope's lofty snows
'Gan to incarnadine
Her first still rose,
Over Tithonus gray,
All rosy-fingered
Leaning, the break of day
A while she lingered.
Dark pine and dreaming crag,
And the tall antlered stag,
The shiver, the warning
Felt, while the mountains great
Tarried in trance as yet
The blush of morning.
The gods yet slept,
While on Olympus high,
In starry majesty,
Her throne Night kept.

High up one mighty hand
Her dusk sceptre held ;
The other with action grand
Half the world veiled.
Her far-spread mantle
Covered with ease
The slumbering cantle
Of lands and seas.
Throned on Olympus,
She sat, who doth imp us
The feathers of death and sleep.
Hard by or sat or stood
Her silent, sombre brood :
Hid in her shadow deep,
Spinsters of life and breath,
The fates mysterious,
And Sleep, and the serious
Stern archer, Death.

ORPHIC MYSTERIES

In her divine, deep mind,
 Ambrosial, holy,
August things by Zeus designed
 Not ripened fully,
Vast Night sat pondering ;
 Then to her steely son,
Who stood by wondering,
 These words begun :
"Archer, dim, terrible,
Who with inerrable
 Sharp, swerveless arrows
Thinnest the house of life,
Rangest earth battle-rife
 Moundest the barrows,
Hang thou thy face
 In sorrow, and shame to know
 What thou hast wrought of woe
In war-vexed Thrace.
Was there not work for thee
 Enough under Rhodope,
Thou must with anguish fee
 Heavenly Calliope ?
These nine days saddened,
 In heaven's bright hall,
By no muse gladdened,
 The father of all
Sits, or apart, aloof,
Brooding the world's behoof
 On some lone crag
Under dark pines. At stand,
Grasped in his sovereign hand
 The flashing thunders lag,
Hast thou a pang
 Those calm brows to corrugate,
 On whose knot the world and fate
And all things hang."

"Mother, reproach me not,"
 Her dreadful progeny

ORPHEUS

Answered, "No random shot,
No erring archery
Shoot I, wherever loose
Life's brittle armour joints
I see, but the will of Zeus
His wisdom appoints,
Therefore though thou behold
Hushed in the halls of gold
Apollo's lyre,
Nor hear from evening blush
On through the starry hush,
Burst heaven's sweet quire ;
Though music seem fled
And all things on Helicon
Mourn with the Muse's son
Eurydice dead.

Chide not, The purpose deep
Whose far ends we slave,
Thou, I, and balmy sleep,
Pain, sorrow, the grave,
Suffered that day
The serpent to steal
In the grass, and waylay
The fair Dryad's heel.
She fled, and in mad pursuit
Ran after with flying foot
Aristaeus enamoured.
'Stay, whom dost thou follow ?
Stop, child of Apollo !'
Rocks, trees, hills clamoured
' 'Tis Orpheus' own wife !
Stop ! thou pursuest
Joy, music,—undoest
The sweet lyre's life.'

He heard not. His fool-born fire
Rushed panting after
The beautiful, breathless flyer,

ORPHIC MYSTERIES

For the gold-showered laughter
Of rich hair that floated round
As lovely a form
As she who with beauty crowned
Rose like a storm,
Surged from the barren sea
On bleak earth. Melpomene
Now, and the dance's queen,
Polymnia, and Erato,
And Thalia their lutes forego :
In the mountains they weep unseen ;
Weeps with the Muse
Each half divine lonely stream,
And the far founts of dream
Their waters refuse.

Aganippē, Pyrene,
The rushy, the willowy,
And fresh Hippocrene,
And clear Callirrhoe.
But thou, Night, ambrosial
Mother, what ails thee, then,
To weep the ephemeral
Sad race of men ?
They by injustice swerved,
To greed or ambition nerved,
Their own woes make.
By their own deeds they waste
Their prosperous fortune, taste
Rue, torment and ache.
Ne'er else had forsook
Aristaeus his thriving bees,
And blithe tasks on flowery leas,
On the Dryad to look.

Never had Orpheus else
His own Eurydice
Left on the lonely fells,
To cruise the stormy sea,

ORPHEUS

Help Argos' heroic crew,
Lyring the brave,
And song-thrilled timbers through
Over the wave.
With magical strains he charmed
The bristling dragon, disarmed,
Till over her coils
Jason with dauntless stride
Stept, and Aeëtes' pride
Aim, end of his toils,
From deeper shade
Even than Dodona's oak,
The glittering fleece he took
And to Hellas conveyed.

But her, his wedded wife,
Among the Dryades
Left he to lonely life ;
Even as the Hyades
She, as those rainy stars
In heaven go weeping,
Through wood and mountain fares.
In sorrow unsleeping,
Pan and Silenus long,
And the wild Satyr throng
Her grief to assuage.
Oft hears her forest sigh
Iacchus, and drew anigh
In talk to engage.
But on she stept,
Deeming all comfort rude,
And hugging her solitude,
For Orpheus wept.

Mountain and forest oak,
To the sky's daughter
Whispering their comfort, spoke.
Woodland and water ;
All things that bore a part

ORPHIC MYSTERIES

In that great choir,
When Nature's mighty heart
Woke to the lyre.
Rocks, trees that followed erst
The newborn creative burst
Of primal rhythm,
Tall elms, whose firm roots break
In Orpheus' melodious wake,
Went dancing with him,
Yew, cedar, the hollies
Breathe now to give relief
To her heart-broken grief,
Sweet, secret solace.

Flowers too, the purple swell
Of lonely heather,
Smilax and asphodel
Breathed, whispered together,
The sad wife minding
Of her dear absent lord,
As her hot tears blinding
Welled, sprinkled the sward.
'Weep not, Eurydice,
Orpheus remembers thee
From far off shores,
While, benched on Argo's thwarts,
He lyres her way and charts
Her dauntless rowers
O'er the lugubrious
Sad whitening wastes of foam,
Back to his moorland home
And thy cheek rubeous.

He sighs.' To comfort thus
The high lyrist's desolate
Wan wife, the Amaracus,
And moss-hid violet,
And the frail flower, Persephonē
Love's, white Narcissus,

ORPHEUS

And the anemone,
And helichrysus,
Whispered their breathing bloom.
She through the forest's gloom
Passed, and the pard,
And the fierce lion eyed.
His mountain cave beside,
And the lone Dryad spared,
Remembering the day
When Orpheus' enchanting strain
Their savage hunger, pain,
Did sweetly allay.

And the wild wind that blusters
O'er storm-swpt Thracee,
And glittering musters
Of her mailed race,
Brygan, Odrysaeon
Bristling and sheathed for strife,
Paused at her aspect wan,
Knew Orpheus' wife.
Both sides in reverence
Made way, none violence
Offered. Toad, newt,
Thorned hedgehog, and blindworm long
Slid past, they refrained to wrong
Her wandering foot.
All, save, alas !
The venomous frightened snake,
And that too leafy brake
Of ferns and grass.

And Phoebus' enamoured boy
And the river-nymph Cyrene's,
Too fond his heart to cloy
On all that in women is,
So fadingly fleet as bloom
As formed so frail,
That fears the swallowing tomb,
Age, sorrow and ail.

ORPHIC MYSTERIES

Alas ! had he divined
The pure and heavenly mind
 In fair Eurydice,
And fame without a blot
And friendship sweet had sought,
 Serene and happy he
Yet had remained,
 Who now lies a demigod,
 Wetting the flowery sod,
With cheek tear-stained.

No more his murmuring bees,
 His art distracts him,
Serves all his thought to please,
 Such sorrow racks him.
He weeps in Flora's garden,
 Pomona's orchard,
He cries to earth for pardon,
 Remorseful, tortured.
At her dark gate he cries,
And down his spirit hies
 To Eurydice's shade.
From awful Stygian shores
Forgiveness he implores,
 Nor shuns to upbraid
Radiant Apollo,
 From whom such fire he took,
 Bees' hive, his art forsook
A nymph to follow.

Glorious deities
 Seek to console him
Back to his flowers and bees,
 And happiness goal him.
Flora is fearful
 For the blossoming, seeding
Of her flowers, grown tearful
 With thick dews beading,
While Aristaeus lies.

ORPHEUS

No more, with laden thighs,
 Humming from bell to bell,
From wallflower to peony,
Strays every labouring bee
 The midsummer pomps to swell.
In sullen languish,
 They on the planks confer
 In murmuring throngs, and share
Their master's anguish.

August high sympathy
 Golden Demeter
Shows him, each heart-torn sigh
 Strives to make sweeter,
Soothed with the solemn thought
 Of those dim groves
Where past wrongs are forgot,
 And the pale shadow loves.
'There shalt thou one day see,
Rash boy, Eurydice,
 Thy nymph too fleet.
There on the pensive mead
Kneel and thy sorrow plead,
 Make old woes sweet.
Rise, rise, a limit
 Set to thy raging grief.
 Old crime new worth may leaf,
Haste to redeem it.

Thy foul fault. A virtue
 May green yet and shoot,
And black blots that smirch you
 Bright happiness fruit.
Up and thy sunny task
 Ply, in whose glow
Already doth Phocis bask,
 And Thessaly low.
Make from the honeycomb
Rough Boreas' bitter home,



ORPHIC MYSTERIES

Make Thracian wood and fell,
And warrior people sweet
Grow to man's golden meat,
Honey ambrosial.
Up and refine
With Flora's gardening hands,
And mild bee-culture, the lands
Of bleak northern pine.

On thee as a demigod
Shall men yet look,
As him who first the clod
In Attic fallows broke,
My nursling Triptolemus,
Who from Eleusis
Sowed earth, and taught for us
The ploughshare's uses.
To him my serpent-car
I gave, and wide and far
Europa's continent,
Asia, the Libyan wild,
In his track they waved and smiled,
Sowing he went.
Now as a god is he,
From Babylon whom to Thebes
And Attica's lovely glebes,
Men worship with me.

I, too, from sorrow
In the time olden
Grew soothed in the furrow,
Demeter golden.
I, Kronos' daughter high,
Sister to Zeus supreme,
Let my great sorrow die,
To serve the mighty scheme,
When, for Persephonë
Wrapt to the shades from me,
The world I wandered ;

ORPHEUS

And over harvestless earth,
Cursed in the green wheat's birth,
My vain tears squandered.
Sole mourning mother
'Mong'st goddesses, I, for Zeus
And the world's boon profuse,
My grief did smother.

That heavenly sorrow nursed,
I knew, would urge on
More greenly fresh, and burst
The year's glad burgeon,
When to my waiting arms,
The slow months counting
With Hermes, my charm of charms,
The dark stair mounting,
Should, for the snow and frost,
Come with the primrose lost.
And last year's anemone,
Fairer though sadder grown
For the long gloom, my own
Gracious Persephonë ;
Back with the green
By Hermes shepherded,
Up from the solemn dead,
Death's gentle queen.

To chasten there doth she
Sit throned, with hallowing,
Sweet, awful purity,
Spirits of bard and king.
The pale repentant troop,
With sad sighs tortured,
She cheers, who pine and droop
In Hades' orchard.
To me hath Kora told,
And Flora shall unfold
To thee and confirm
Why in the secrecy

ORPHIC MYSTERIES

Of brooding wisdom high,
Zeus suffered the worm
To sting, that day,
When from thy mad pursuit
She fled, the fair Dryad's foot ;
Hear, and thy grief allay.

What past death's portal is,
That, Orpheus, reveal
To all that mortal is
Clearer, and heal
With music, and mystery,
The tomb's dark sorrow.
On blind-urged history
Make Hades' morrow.
For this cause Eurydice
From Orpheus was reft, and thee
That he may blazon
Death's vasty hall to man,
And the Elysian
Dim meadow gaze on.
To him shall grant
Zeus, and the gods, this day
To be of death's dark way,
To men, a hierophant.

So hath Persephonë
Whispered, though all in fear
Of her dread lord, to me
Close in my secret ear,
Sitting at heaven's high board.
Reft of the Muses' throng,
And our Olympian lord,
These nine days long,
But now at last hath he
For mourning Calliope
A day appointed,
Of all gods a-gathering

ORPHEUS

To joy back and song to wing
Heaven's feast disjointed.
From the sheer groundsel
Of Olympus hall hath sped
Iris, all storm-footed
To summon a council.

Of the blessed gods. I go,
But thou, Aristaeus, arise,
Seek Orpheus out, where low
Weeping in dust, he lies.
Let him thy sorrow learn,
Thy heart-felt remorse.
He hates thee, but thou shalt earn
His pardon perforce,
If thou his mission high
Haste in his tearful eye
To burst quick.' Demeter
Thus spoke, and from Flora's close
Her snake-car mounted. It rose
On the wind fleeter
Than any bird.
So Morpheus did say to me
Who all their colloquy,
Close by, o'er heard.

I met him, and gentle Sleep,
Hasting 'neath Rhodope
To cast in slumber deep,
Sad weeping Calliope.
For so Zeus bade them
And thou, I know,
With like task did'st lade them,
Orpheus' keen woe
To lull in dreamless rest.
Me on far other quest
The sovereign order
In Heracles' track to go,
Tasked bearing his dreadful bow.

ORPHIC MYSTERIES

And be a forder
Of Hebrus swift courses.
With his terrible club he felled
Fierce Diomedes, and quelled
His man eatjng horses.

But lo, in the dim East, Dawn
Peers. With the quiver
The Latmian forest lawn
Is freshly ashiver.
Mother 'tis time to mount
Thy dragon chariot,
Fly morning's brightening fount
And no place tarry at,
Till over lands and seas
At the Antipodes
Thou shalt unyoke
There, where first evening falls,
Where Phoebus the sun car stalls.
The Ethiop folk
That blameless people
To sup thee ready are,
Over the darkening far
Pacific ripple.

I in this garth of Zeus,
Through city and plain
Thining man's life profuse,
Mother, remain.
Those threads which Clotho hath
And Lachesis spun,
I let on their sunny path
Unroll and run.
But those which Atropos,
I know them, hath marked for loss
To snap asunder.
I wait here and all day long
Range through the battle throng,
Follow the thunder,

ORPHEUS

Where in some valley
The clarion blast rings out,
And bronze-clad warriors shout
Clash, flee and rally.

God's wrath retributive,
I pour, 'his anger,
On men who in turmoil live
And love war's clangour.
Proud, though it grieve me,
The high will Olympian
To serve, I thief me
The hot life of man.

Fierce are they, quarrelling,
Still to be laurelling
Their heads with victory.

Today what battlefield
Shall me thick harvest yield ?
Steeled Ares' lictor I
Already behold.

The trampling armies gay
See moved in helmed array,
Glittering all gold.

The shout of the slayer,
I hear it plain,
And that wild last prayer
Of who shall be slain.
Far, far shall the tumult be,
And the blood streamed rosy all.
From thy hush and tranquillity,
Night, mother ambrosial,
Thou frownest. What ails thee then,
The sorrows of brief-lived men
So to compassionate ?
But the more large to room
Thy glorious hush and gloom
Amid war shouts I wait ;
Amid trumpets linger,
Till thy vast heavenly hush

ORPHIC MYSTERIES

Down on the armies rush,
With parting finger.

Go sleep, and the serious
Sweet sisters, each destiny,
Mother mysterious,
Thy pomp shall accompany.
But leave thou, mother,
Disease and Age
And Plague, their brother,
And Famine, my page,
And Carnage, and furious Rout,
Who follow the battle shout,
They shall escort,
With that runner Titanic
By Ares' car, Panic.

My on-looming port,
Behind them, I stride,
God's archer unerrable,
And thy son terrible,
Death, Mother, thy pride."

So speaking, Thanatos,
Who life's term narrows,
In his quiver that sheaf of loss
Put back his arrows.
But throned immutable
Mysterious, dim
Night, grand, inscrutable
Looked down on him.
Shaking her mystical
Veiled brows majestic,
She frowned and darkened,
While, deep in her shadow,
Who mows the meadow
Of earth's life hearkened.
Large words distillable
From hush and darkness, all
Came slow with dying fall,
Each murmuring syllable.

ORPHEUS

“Too rash to reave the light
From mortals thou art
In thy triumphant might,
Son of my heart ;
Prize strength but show lenity
To creatures ephemeral.
From life's autumnal tree
Let leaf by leaf fall
Slow shed generations
Like foliage. Who fashions
Man's breath, man's maker,
Is high Zeus, whose wisdom all
Governs, and thou his thrall
But thinnest life's acre,
That ever more fair,
More perfect in stature,
The tree of man's nature
May tower in air.

Go not, I warn thee now,
To Ares' iron house,
To be his dreadful plough,
His wild cause espouse.
What needs thee bewhetting
His will injurious,
His fierce thoughts setting
On battle furious ?
Work has heaven's queen enough
To reign his temper rough,
Impetuous, fickle.
Nor Herē's awful cheek
Stays him, nor Hebe's beck,
When time's slow sickle
He wills to hurry,
And down from his steely tower
Swoops Hebe's splendid flower,
Tall youth, in a flurry.
To mow in the highlands
Of Thrace or Paeonia,

ORPHIC MYSTERIES

Or the surge-beat islands,
Or deep-valed Haemonia,
Whither the sally,
Of fury blinded
Rude Ares to rally,
Death, art thou minded ?
With what towers wrestle ye
In lovely Thessaly,
Or what sweet demesne
To ravage dutiful,
In Argos beautiful,
Home of fair women,
Go ye ? O Death, my son,
'Tis thou provokest him,
Egg'st on his humour grim,
Thou terrible one.

Thou and birth-moving,
Sweet, overmighty,
Fresh. laughter-loving,
Blithe Aphrodite,
Lured by the laughter
Of the world's rose,
To follow after
Strong Ares goes,
Lit by each golden tress
To lop earth's overpress,
Her teeming burgeon.
But thou dost thou not blush,
Child of my tranquil hush,
Life's calm, sane, surgeon,
To follow with joy
The slaughterous riot
Of Here's unquiet,
Rash, pitiless boy.

Doth it pang not nor daunt thee,
Strange, sombre archer,
Who glorying dost vaunt thee

ORPHEUS

With Mars to go marcher,
Creation's thronging
Sad struggling littleness
For boundless space longing
In its frail brittleness.
Pitying I saw it rain
From the sky father's pain
When time, (to learn it he
Quick was, earth's evil law)
When Kronos his sire's root shore
Gashed blue eternity.
Down like a dream
I saw from the primal knife
Creation's suffering life
Heaven's dark blood stream.

In the surge of Oceanus
It fell, it scathed,
Whose waves yet paeon us
That wail when life breathed.
Up from the crimson foam
Uranus' daughter,
A glory of laughing bloom,
Rose from the water.
Thence from the sex-urge blind
Came paired each warring kind,
Tooth, tusk elephantine,
Claw, talon, to fratricide,
Hate, cruelty touched, and pride
By the forged adamant
First steel. With Cypris' breath
Ye twain in that hour forlorn
From my sad side were born,
Sweet Slumber, dark Death.

Through all that early
Vast heaving Titan prime,
When Kronos surly
Ruled tyrannous Time

ORPHIC MYSTERIES

Thou over land and sea
 Sped'st in the power and pride
Of thy strong archery.
 Thinning the waters wide
The monsters, which earth profuse
Bred from the slime and ooze,
 Exultant to slay,
Ere yet from the giant's pent
Mountain and continent
 Heaved up to the day,
While big-mooned Thea
 Swayed brief nights, and rapid earth
 Choked with enormous birth,
Wast thou creation's fear.

Enough to remember, son,
 Thy large day of power.
Now Zeus hath his calm begun ;
 'Tis life's glad hour,
Which to perfect, in hope
 The universe pants,
Since first on Ida's slope
 Shouted the Corybantes,
Drowned with their clash divine
His small cries infantine.
 Who grasp should the flashing bolts,
Since Ida's nymphs wonder-eyed
Round Amaltheia hide
 Deep in the Cretan holts.
Since power to enthrone us,
 Might, Wisdom, Rule, Majesty
 Rhea swaddled a stone to fee
The hunger of Kronos.

In vain at Zeus supreme
 Dim fallen Titans rage,
To shake his blissward scheme,
 Bettering from age to age.
For righteous law austere

ORPHEUS

Its corner stone, Themis is,
While guards it with awful fear
Avenging Nemesis.
Strong knees its pillars are
Where Atlas by ocean far
Stoops grandly to column.
Propped on his mighty nape
The bowed ethereal shape
Of blue heaven solemn ;
Atlas, whose patience
Themis' wise daughters nerve,
Peace, Justice, Order, -preserve
The world's foundations.

I too majestic Night
Taught by the strong sage Hours,
Descend in tranquil might
To balm earth and freshen flowers ;
To aid the world's bland scheme
O'er all things my starry shine
I spread, my hush and dream,
My darkness divine.
For Zeus, the tired soul of things
Under Sleep's downy wings
With stillness I swathe.
Creation the milk of rest
Drains from my darkling breast.
For sweetly I bathe
In my fresh dew,
Lulled action's heroic eyes,
To dream of the glorious prize,
Wake, strengthened anew.

As yet dawn slowly
A cold white streak
Lingers her holy
Pale light to break.
Why dost thou eagerly
Press me, my choicest yoke,

ORPHIC MYSTERIES

To sup not meagrely
 With the blest Ethiop folk.
Art thou so hurried then
That dauntless man of men
 To rouse from his pallet low,
In the stable of Diomede,
And the bold courage lead,
And his terrific bow
On some new urge
 Of his tasked mighty strength,
 Earth from its pests, at length,
Its terrors to purge.

See the high Thunderer
 In the covert divine,
Broods yet a ponderer,
 Of yon great pine,
While in the shadow hid,
 August marmoreal eyes
Dream under musing lid.
 I may not rise
Lest from those sovereign brows,
That plumbless wisdom house,
 The hushed, awed destinies
Or his bolt-grasping hand,
Some least sign, some gesture grand,
 That speaks his fiat, miss.
As yet no bird
 Wakes in the pine-bough's gloom,
 The great hand that shapeth Doom
Not once hath stirred.

I watch in admiring lost,
 And thou, too, behold,
Who in destruction dost
 Glory, those locks of gold.
Ambrosial waving they shed
 From curbed almighty power
A horror of blissful dread
 On rock, tree and flower.

ORPHEUS

World-tasked beneficence
Ploughs, furrows with lines how intense,
The spacious forehead broad.
To Mercy and Ruth endeared,
The stern lip and short curled beard
What thoughts majestic load.
Down over the world
Remiss in his strong hand flash
The cloudy thunders, but crash,
Moan, mutter, unhurled.

Be schooled in that curb august,
That shames all tyranny,
Of his firm, temperate, just
World ruling harmony.
Musing on which I thence
Draw queenly wisdom lone,
To cover the continents
With my vast mantle thrown.
Thence belted Orion stern,
The Pleiades, all stars that burn,
At my black sceptre's wave
Hasten with punctual press
Their sparkling sleeplessness
In ocean to lave.
My core of tranquility,
My peace which the world restores,
Here sitting o'er seas and shores
And mountains, thence deepen I.

Son, be no renegade
To thy calm ancestry,
This dusk ambrosial shade
And holy hush of me.
His sovereign fiat
Follow, be mild,
Cleave to his quiet,
O my stern subtle child."
"In vain from my fealty
Would'st thou inveigle me,

ORPHIC MYSTERIES

Mother ! How oft thou sayest,
Yet shall thy arm enfold
That roomy empire old,
Divine and waste,
When Chaos his wings
Spread, and a starry dream
Thou reigned'st o'er all supreme,
Night, eldest of things."

"That roomy silence vast
May haunt and possess me yet.
With glorious new things I cast
My lot and no longer regret.
Thin, thin like a fallen dream
Are now all engulfing sky,
And Chaos. As things that seem,
The Titans and Kronos lie,
Yet now for Asclepius dead
Since radiant Apollo fled
The banquet of joy and ease.
And daily doth Herē chafe
At Zeus for large vouchsafe
Of favour to Heracles.
Heaven's blissful revel
Marred, lyreless as anarchy, see,
At direful strife to be
My sad thoughts level.

I fear thee plotting
Some wild conspiracy,
Of Pluto's knotting,
And the king of the stormy sea.
This blow at the Muses,
Eurydice's death,
At all that high Zeus is,
'Tis aimed, all breath.
And now the stern Kronidae,
With Ares conjunct and thee,
Murmuring in sullen wrath,

ORPHEUS

Shall plea snatch for mutiny ;
That Orpheus have scrutiny,
 A mortal, of hell's dim secret path.
Thence, thunder's rattle
 And calm Zeus to disenthroned
 They hope, with Phlegethon moan
Of cosmic battle.

Else why, O my cruel,
 Remorseless progeny,
But war's fire to fuel
 Would'st thou ask of me,
Of all that bewildering
 Sad pomp of the dark,
My dreadful children,
 Plague, Carnage and Famine stark.
Never till Hermes stand
Before me and make demand
 Of all those tearful
Lugubrious ills, my brood,
Who in such multitude,
 Camp-followers fearful,
Heel war and ravage,
 Dare I to thee hire out
 Wild tumult, panic and rout,
And slaughter savage.

In my peace I hold till then,
 In my dark shroud them,
Till the ripe sins of men,
 Down rushing, crowd them,
When Zeus, who both war and peace
 Stewards for mortals,
Shall bid me their pomp release
 From darkness' portals.
O muffled archer stern,
But for whose darts, eterne,
 Ungraying, deathless
Life were, earth's bosom

ORPHIC MYSTERIES

With tree, bird, blossom
Man, beast had breathless
Locked, grappled, long since,
In one slow anguish
Of roomless languish,
But for thee, Prince.

Noble thy function high,
Honoured of Zeus, approved,
I pray thee, I, even I,
Night, solemn, beloved,
Thy mother, whose bosom wide
Of silence and secrecy
Disburdens, half-propheesied
Dim murmurs to thee.
Go not, I fear a fall,
To heaven's high golden hall ;
From council abstain
With bright conferring Powers,
Who love not all save the Hours,
Nay loathe thee, disdain ;
Nor Hell's dark king,
Though his liege servant,
Be not too fervent
To please in everything ;

Nor Ares, delighting
To strew for him mournful graves,
Nor at stormy inviting
The monarch of waves.
They use thee disdainfully
But as their tool.
Why toilest thou painfully ?
Be not their fool.
Rather with me today,
Far in the evening gray,
With the Hesperides,
Or where loud waters call,
In Thetis' emerald hall,

ORPHEUS

Banquet and sit at ease,
Laying apart,
For one night laying
Aside thy slaying,
Proud errorless dart.

Thou wilt not ? Undutiful !
Hence, lover and lord
Of dead bones unbeautiful,
By all gods abhorred !
Go, go ! Thy brother Sleep,
And the Dream-Powers processional,
Better my pomp shall keep
Than thou, unfilial !
Sleep, and the serious
Dusk Fates mysterious,
My sweet child Slumber,
Who in his lovely death
Creation harboureth,
And Dreams without number.
And here they come to me,
Phoebetor and Morpheus,
From witching sad Orpheus
Back to Eurydice."

Up from Olympus steep
The Dream gods following
Were seen, of balmy Sleep,
The wings world-shadowing.
Night on her ebon throne,
Which now with twilight paled,
With dim far whispered tone
Her fleet sons hailed :
"Say, oh my loveliest
Still offspring, have ye my hest
Sealed thoroughly fast ?
Orpheus in slumber laid,
And his lulled soul, conveyed
Past Acheron, past

ORPHIC MYSTERIES

Stealing Oblivion
On flowers Elysian
With Eurydice laid the man ?
Speak, Hypnos, my son."

And the sweet whisperer,
The world's soft luller,
Whose lips of balmisperer
And sorrow's duller :
"With pierced soul-anguish rife,
We found neath Rhodope
Weeping his Dryad wife,
The son of Calliope.
The drowse of my popped lie
In his ear whispered I,
My wings did cover him ;
My locks that opiate dripped,
My wand in Lethe steeped
Did I shake over him
Eurydice's drooper,
Body from soul I shook,
On my wings his spirit took
In dream-lulled stupor.

ORPHEUS

GRIEF OF ORPHEUS

Alone in the falling
 Moist dew sat lonely
Orpheus, recalling
 Euridice only.
Only her dying
 Last words, her look,
From the great lyre, sighing,
 The world's heart shook.
Wide over Thracian hills
And gorges, the pine wood fills
 With larch, fir, bounded
High as blanchèd Rhodope,
The stormy melody
 Echoed, resounded.
Firece hearts it stirred
 Of lions, that well-known lyre,
 From their eyes tears of fire
Dropped, as they heard.

To hear the last rich smart
 Of Orpheus fingering,
And music's broken heart,
 Evening stood lingering.
The strings Apollonian
 On that waste heathy slope
Burst quivering, and wailing ran
 The death cry of hope.
Night so appealed to
The darkness be sealed to
 Delayed yet those bars,
Obeying evening's flush.
And stayed her trailing hush
 Of silence and stars.
Yet upon Phrygian,
 Snowy Olympus she stood
 And reined by a sombre wood
Her dream car Stygian,

ORPHIC MYSTERIES

High rocks and towering crags
Rang, pierced, a-shiver
Low marsh and flowering flags
And torrent and river.
Swift Hebrus a-linger
Stayed, shuddering to know
Of Thrace's sweet singer
The sorrow, the woe.
Far down in glooming seas
They heard, the Nereides,
And in sweet fear
Round Doris came cowering,
Their green locks showering
About them. But near,
On the oak-shadowed hill,
The nightingale amorous
Heard sorrow more clamorous
Than hers, and was still.

Sweet Philomela,
In the dim wood,
The pang that no healer
Knows, understood.
In her bird form
The human anguish
She heard, whose remembered storm
Cores all her languish.
In dusk assembled throng
Of hushed leaves, her piteous song
Bubbling and bleeding
She ceased for Itylus,
The heart-wound more pitiless
Of Orpheus heeding.
Re-edged to the pain
That thrills her for Procne's child,
She hushed, a woe more wild
Hearing complain.

But far down the famous lyre,

ORPHEUS

Which once round Argo's hull
Charmed up their dripping choir
From sea-depths cool,
On the heroes in wonder
To gaze admiring
And lisp the sweet thunder
Of Orpheus' lyring :
Sage Nereus' daughters,
Down through the waters,
To hear now its agony
Long held in grieved surprise
Lips parted and listening eyes,
Each nymph of the sea.
Up pale sweet Proto
From under green canopy
Of vast waves, and Panope
Gazed fearful and Doto.

And Limnorea
Who rules the glimmering calm,
The pearled wrist by her
Held hard, and the palm
Of strong Dynamene,
Who masses the billow,
And who smoothes, Lysamene,
The seaman's soft pillow,
Queens of the ocean,
Who sceptre its motion,
And blithe Galatea,
Who rolls on the curded shore
The wild waves and makes them roar :
All huddled, one here,
One there, close clung
Together, looked wistfully
Where Thetis' face tristfully
At Doris' knee hung.

She, coral crowned empress
The sad heart divining

ORPHIC MYSTERIES

Of her, who the gleam-press
Of waves sets shining,
She, on whom sea caves rang,
Loud crying her sister's fled,
Peleus from ambush sprang
An immortal to wed.
"O prime of my Nereid brood,"
She said, "O mortal-wooed
High-sorrowed Thetis,
Alarm from thy sisters take
O thou, whose heart doth ache,
Whose eye ever wet is.
Speak, thy ear taverns
And feasts on mournful sound
Which booms to this depth profound,
Shakes wan shells and caverns.

Never since stones did tower
From the lyre's lovely note
Breathed it such glorious power
Down hither to float.
Such music as Thebes up-piled
To home Antiope
Knows only the Muse's child,
The son of Calliope.
Yet what woe dolorous
With gloom to colour us
Knells now, as when autumn
Wails here, when sea-blooms shed
And our weed forests dead
Strew the sea's bottom.
See it hath frightened
To me the sea-glories all,
And with funeral fall
Thy sad cheek nighted.

Though mixed with mortality
And wedded to human woe,
Though childing a babe, death's fee,
Why should it pang thee so,

ORPHEUS

The joyous instrument
Which Hermes fashioned,
And Phoebus' own fingers lent
Such force impassioned ?
What made thee my calm lap seek
And hide thee, O sweet pale cheek,
His star-prank'd harmony
Who, to high Zeus most dear,
Hast from dethroning fear,
Promethean prophecy,
Shielded, that curse
Of Cronos, fallen hoary Time,
Earth, sky, the founded sublime
Well ordered universe ?

All-deigning a mortal's bed
Hast thou child guarded
In having Peleus wed
The dear awarded.
Happiest of heroes, he,
Wise, valiant, virtuous, sage,
Who tops and crowns for thee
Hellas' most golden age.
What dangers should threaten, then,
Thetis, thy man of men,
What peril in Phthia ?
Fear'st thou, where safe he thrones
Over his myrmidons,
Pealed from the Orphean lyre
Which once resounded,
For prime worth selecting him
All other oars to dim
While Argo bounded :

Like a thing half divine,
To feel her boundless home,
On sped the Pelion pine
Exultingly swept with foam.



ORPHIC MYSTERIES

Touching his heavenly lyre
 Charming the dolphin shoals
Sang Orpheus to curb and fire
 Haughty heroic souls.
When to our glimmering green
Dim ocean halls serene
 Burst Panope crying,
'Come see a wonder rare,
Sight ravishing fair,
 See, this way hieing
With sails that belly on
 With foam-churning, flashing oars,
 Pull'd by her mighty rowers,
The pine of Pelion.

Of which a whisper rife
 Through our sea caves
Ran, how endowed with life
 To dare all waves,
By Pallas' wise fingers wrought
 Should come a vessel
Instinct with soul and thought
 Our surges to wrestle.
That tall pine conspicuous, wide,
Half shadowing Pelion's side
 One day did Psamathe see,
Wandering her sands astound,
Sway, totter and to the ground
 Heard crash the majestic tree.
For Jason to bring
 Glittering on poop or mast
 The fleece to which Helle fast
So vainly did cling.

And 'Phrixus I' crying fell drowned
 To our eyes' horror
That continent parting sound
 To name since, 'Ye bore her,'
Said Pallas majestic

ORPHEUS

To wandering Psamathe
"Down to your emerald hall
Under the clanging sea
Go now your sisters fair
Every crowned queen prepare
And your mow-headed sire
To welcome the carpentry
Of my saw, adze, this tree,
Which yet the sweet lyre
Shall, and the puissant oar,
Heroes, the glory of Greece
Impel, and the golden fleece
To Hellas restore.

See them in clustering.
Tall, beautiful, fearless eyed,
Bold groups to the mustering
They come, Achaea's pride.
See by that snowy tent
Urging the shipwright's hand
Their leader magnificent
Jason, heroic, grand ;
And clasping his mighty knees
Sits yonder great Heracles
Alcmene's steely son
Lion hearted, whose labours known
O'er Hellas, the wide world blown
As soon as they begun.
Deeming as but a gage
Of glory to exploits grim
He goes, and follows him,
Hyllus, his lovely page.

Near them where Orpheus stands
With the world thrilling lyre,
See, out of Thracian lands
Whom Oreithya
Sends from her snow-hushed springs
Torrents and boulders,



ORPHIC MYSTERIES

Her tall sons, two glorious wings
Shadowing their shoulders.

Either war's valet is
Zetes and Calais

Each to each dutiful
And by them the brothers are,
Each like a splendid star,
Of Helen beautiful,
To manage steeds, Castor,
Famous, and with the fist
Polydeuces the pugilist,
The boxing-ring's master.

To eye them in peril
Comes Mopsus inspired seer
Through blind ways sterile
Bronzed Tiphys to steer ;
Nor wrecking by glory's side
Disdaining what life is
Idmon foretells with pride
His own death and Tiphys',
Both Amphitryonides
Heartens, of winds and seas
Telling, how storm
Round craggy Antisiro
Drove him and crashed on Cos
And how the deform
Fearful sea monster he
Slaying, a city's wail,
Laomedon's daughter pale
Rescued Hesione.

He breaks off, death's playfellow
Smiling, and Orpheus near
Strikes up and sings aglow
The hero that knew not fear,
Who with gripped sinewy hand
The lion strangled
And bears upon shoulders grand

ORPHEUS

His vast hide dangled,
Whose bow twang Arcadia heard
Bull, boar and brazen bird
 (Erymanthus darkened ;)
And the proud towers of Ilion
Now and Laomedon
 Enchanted they hearkened
Thronging the mountain sward
 Save one, whose wet eye shines
 The Trojan's sad heroine's
Salaminian lord.

And lo, never yellow
 In leaf to adventure
Strong Heracles' fellow
 In grateful debenture
Bound to his mighty peer
 Who since he so steadied him
In battle, storm, peril sheer
 To Hesione wedded him.
What pales thee, 'tis Telamon,
Aeachus' noble son,
 Ah ! turn not away
Fair, frowning Nereid
Slow gentle time hath hid,
 Long buried the day,
Thy darling, thy dew,
 When Phocus, in anger wild
 Great Aeachus' splendid child
In quarrel he slew.

Long pays he nor shall amiss,
 Rue, his rash ire
In sea-girt Salamis
 To brook retire.
Forgive him and Peleus too
 Who yonder comes
Round him the glorious crew
 Buzzes and hums.



ORPHIC MYSTERIES

To eye him importunate,
The man thrice fortunate,
 Thrice blessed, thronging
To gaze on, immortals chose
To marry their ocean rose,
 Their ardent longing
They feed. But go
 What precious love cargo
 Comes fraught with swift Argo
Bid fair Thetis know.

Bid every sea-splendour there
 All calm-throned goddesses
Quit each her golden chair
 With flashing pearl bodices.
A glory of swimming arms
 And hair spray-showering
Comes surging, lay by alarms
 To see this thing.
Not long ago incredulous
White plane saw sedulous
 Sawing and singing
In my swift fingers' gleam
Who Argo's the shipwright seem
 And hammer loud ringing.
Shall ye sit doubting
 Calm on your golden throne
 Where never a billow moan
My fleet ship flouting."

With Pallas' proud words and strange
 Did Psamathe come to us
Nor, sisters, did their full range
 Incredible home to us.
Yet each morn from side to side
 A rigid watch kept I
O'er my sea-prospects wide
 Nor noon-drowsed slept I.
When O, but this moment nigh

ORPHEUS

Looming up suddenly
I saw her sally on
Manned with a vision rare
A glory of demigods fair
Of noble galleon,
Do ye your soft ears couch
Upward and hark I through waves
Orpheus' heroic staves
Pealing my words avouch.'

So Panope first to us
What seemed derision
On blind ears burst to us
That lordly vision.
We hearkened. The lofty strain
Down, sweetly applauding
Thy hero, with oft refrain
His virtue lauding
Came to thy ravished ears
And thee to celestial tears
Far other they wrung
Than now led joyfully
Loth thy cheeks' pudency
Veiling, we sprung
Through green gleams warping
Saw Argo and all her crew
With wonder forever new
Heard rapt the harping.

The sad crime sang he
And splendid Phocus slain
Stern Aechus rang he
The curse that sent the twain
One to the Attic isle
While him Eurystheus
In Phthia with harbouring smile
Poor outlaw took pity on.
With such grief did master us
The pealing disastrous

ORPHIC MYSTERIES

Sad, stormy melody,
Fainting we bore along
Oar-chime and thrilling song
Heart stricken Psamathe.
Thou, happy Thetis, too
Pierced to the tragic truth
Of Peleus fate-clouded youth
Swam'st melted with rue.

Fleeing from over seas
To the grave alter clinging
Of the dread Eumenides
Round nightingale's singing,
The shuddered at homicide
Where leaf was and bird
How Aechus son purified
Breathless we heard.
But far in a darksome wood
The step brother's soil-drunk blood
As yet unsatisfied
Moaning o'er Nereid bowers
Loud through Oenone's towers
In the ear of Zeus crying,
Zeus, Zeus, whose heart
Justice and pity's throne
Over itself alone
Broods plumbless apart.

Whether to sanction thus
The stern just curse
Of righteous Aechus
And fence the universe
Build stronger with the law severe
All-founding Themis is
Or make men reverence, fear
Avenging Nemesis.
Or by the sentence moved
Of the sire who doomed, yet loved

ORPHEUS

He further would try
By suffering Peleus' soul
Rouse and to virtue school
By sharp adversity.

(Unfinished)



ORPHIC MYSTERIES

THE CALL OF ORPHEUS

So by her grave
 Lying Eurydice,
The sad sweet stave
 Of only Eurydice,
Sang the despairing
 High poet of Thrace,
Mournfully staring
 Down on the grass
There where in poses
Of laughter the roses
 His heart did craze.
In golden mazes
Ran kingcups, and daisies
 Grew up from her face.
Sang how the powers
 Of death and sleep carried
 Her loved form, married
To earth and flowers.

Dark purple Rhodope's
 High gorges hung
Over Calliope's
 Fair child as he sung,
The snow blanced mountains'
 White awful peak
Flushed with the fountains
 Of morning's break.
Its far Alp glimmering
Through his tears shimmering
 On him looked down,
But no high splendour
Of dawn how tender
 Could smooth his frown,
His eye could unmesh
 Thence where from her body
 The roses blossom ruddy
Up from her flesh.

ORPHEUS

Cried Orpheus, "What rumour
Ye roses, who wing
Your way to ungloom her,
From earth do ye bring ?
Or from under the bosom
Of earth's dark swell
Cometh your blossom
Of her to tell ?
Over the languish
Of Styx and the anguish
Of Acheron stream
Tell how in Hades'
Gray dimness her shade is
Mid flowers that dream.
Far down in hell
Dwells she in shadow,
Pacing the meadow
Of Asphodel."

From the roses a breath
Came murmuring choral,
From the bones of death
A perfume thrilled, oral.
It shot through the heart
Of sorrowful Orpheus,
Half seemed his smart
To balsam like Morpheus.
'Twas heaven's queen pitying
His woeful ditty
Articulate made
Those buds Idaean
And bade hush-alien
Speak unafraid.
A wind the red flame
Shook of each flower,
And the whole bower
Vocal became.

"O prime of Lyrists,"

ORPHIC MYSTERIES

Said they, "Of thy power
We panegyrists
Remember the hour
When Hebrus to linger
By thee delayed,
Charmed by thy finger
His swift current stayed.
When music first founded
On earth, rocks bounded
And hills for glee,
And woods uprooting
Their pride went footing
Thy harmony.
And her moss-covered cool
The shy sweet Dryad
Left, and the Naiad
Her shimmering pool.

In thy cause fervent
We roses are mighty,
Each lovely servant
Of Aphrodite,
To speak and bid thee
Rejoice, for we bear
Glad tidings to rid thee
Of sorrow and care ;
Ere up in laughter
We followed after
Persephone's step
In fields Elysian,
Bowers Aphrodisian,
We saw her weep.
With pale true lovers
She hometh, the talk
Of all in the walk,
Which the high myrtle covers.

Fleet Atalanta
Was her companion,

ORPHEUS

No more hard panter
 After Milanion.
An apple she held,
 And great Meleager.
Whom love's fire felled,
 Was there to page her.
There Idas Marpessa
Reweds with blessure
 Of thunder yet scarred,
Round Ceyx Alcyone
Twines as the briony
 The elms-bole hard.
And many are there
 Who on Argo followed
 And the wild boar halloo'd
In Calydon fair.

She saw us the mystical
 High summons obey
Of Hermes majestical
 Toward the bright day.
'O blithe rose faces',
 She said, 'Going dutiful
To serve the Graces
 And their queen beautiful,
Up with the lily
And the daffodilly
 With all things vernal,
May, primrose, anemone,
Heeling Persephone,
 From the eternal
Calm, happy mead
 Following birthward
 Her glad step earthward,
With men to bleed.

When fields Sicilian
 Ye reach to fill



ORPHIC MYSTERIES

Earth's lap, and million
O'er dale and hill,
Place, to make sweeter
Her long winter's frost,
In the arms of Demeter
Her dear daughter lost,
Seek ye the Thracian wild
Where amid storms exiled
Orpheus' great lyre
Charms, on the rude blast hurled
In Boreas' arms snow-whirled,
Fair Orithyia.
Seek ye the mounded sward
Where under daisies dim
I still am all to him.
Say to my lord :

"Orpheus, Eurydice
Weep'st thou, the mournful
Mouldering earth of me
Under the scornful
Sentinel lily,
Under mute grasses
Dumb nature stilly
Whose guard none passes ?
Cast off the tragical,
Seize thy lyre magical,
Dare thou death's portals.
Take thy way valorous
Through the realm dolorous,
Shut from all mortals.
Press where my shade is,
Fields unarable,
By no plough arable,
The furrow of Hades." "

There ceased the sound,
And now hush-holy,
In that still mound,

ORPHEUS

And melancholy
Stood those fair creatures,
Bloom, perfume only,
Their own and nature's,
In silence lonely.
Yet the whole bevy
Shook laughter leafy
To Orpheus' glad heart.
From the insoluble
Marvel, quick, voluble,
Throbbing apart
He leaped up abashed,
Mazed, hoping, glorying,
And his heart storying
On the lyre-strings crashed.

"In the dark mansion dreaded
Of Erebus liv'st thou
And the blind way threaded,
Eurydice, giv'st thou
Me, the sweet hope of thee
Lying, to come
Where flowers the droop of thee
Amid shadow and doom ?
Not Acheron's shiver,
Nor the loud river
Of torment and wail
Shall, or the serpent-hisses
From the blue darting tresses
Of Furies, avail.
Or Lethe have power
To drowse and delay me
Or Cerberus stay me
From thee, my flower.

Lead thou, world famous,
Far-journeyed lyre,
Once joy became us,
But now to hell-fire,

ORPHIC MYSTERIES

Down the dim terrible
Descent to bleed,
Sob thy unerrable
Way down, lead.
With music's sweet trouble
Make the foam bubble.
Oar, ferryman dread
Hire on Styx rolling,
Make waft thee, consoling
The tears of the dead.
That by Phlegethon's bank,
In agony burning,
Remorseful shades turning
Shall bless thee and thank.

With that belovèd name
Thrilling the strings of thee
Hasten thy love to claim
Lyre, thy Eurydice.
Make stand Ixion's wheel,
Sisyphus' stone stop,
Make the fierce vulture feel
Tityus' flesh drop.
Tantalus' thirsty lip
Make thou with water drip,
Move Rhadamanthys,
Make all the stern judgement ring
Make Minos and hell's dark king
Weeping to grant this
That thy music have meed
Back to the upper air,
Life, bloom and day-light fair
Thy lost love to lead."

ORPHEUS

THE HESITATION OF ORPHEUS.

So speaking, so singing,
 Flushed, ardent, he stood,
The bold notes still winging
 Over stream, over wood,
As a flock of swans mounting
 The rough blast climb on,
Their sweet cygnets counting
 In the rushes of Strymon.
Who then should convoy him
Down the dark cavern grim
 Where hell's mouth lay,
Down the wild, strenuous
Steep, discontinuous,
 Difficult way ?
Who had this lonely
 Last crown of miracles
 Laboured through ? Heracles,
Son of Zeus, only.

To what adventure,
 Thought he and started,
Would'st thou indenture
 My rash foot charted ;
Have Orpheus subscribe to
 A poet and weak
With far bloom bribe to
 O dead lovely cheek ?
He made of iron
Slew the fierce lion
 And the serpent nine-headed.
Hermes before him
And Pallas to shore him
 The murk way threaded.
For his valour's fee
 He Cerberus brought
 From the shadows, but not,
Death's loved treasure, he.

ORPHIC MYSTERIES

As thus by the shady
Dark terrors appalled
Of hell, though his lady,
Love, memory, called,
Orpheus with forward foot,
The lyre chords fingering,
Stood yet irresolute,
Demurring and lingering,
She came by whose lovely form
Floating doth take by storm
Zephyr and Flora :
A butterfly gorgeous
As April can forge us,
Gay as Aurora :
On his fear crying shame,
His coward heart covering
With mockery, hovering
Floating she came

In swerves of disdainful
Breeze-buoyed fluttering
Round him : "Oh stainful
Criminal", muttering,
"What fear, pale trembler,
So blanches thy lip,
Thy tongue a dissembler
Doth shame to let slip ?
Could aid of Athene's
Succour Alcmene's
Lion-souled son,
Have led through all peril
From the grey fields sterile
Of Hades dun ;
And could she be tardy,
The pure lofty Muse,
To get thee from Zeus
Like succour, unhardy ?

ORPHEUS

I who so often
A-sail from the distance
Have voyaged to soften
Thy sorrow's insistence,
On the air's wide ocean
Once more to lull
Thy spirit's commotion,
Like the oar-winged hull
Of Argo ploughing
The foamless unsnowing
Gust ridges I come,
On wild ways that shudder thee
To guide and rudder thee
Far as the gloom.
From Helicon, know,
Me the high Muses
Yoked and Love chooses
With thee to go."

To hear the fair creature
Speak sage admonishment
So changed his feature,
In deep astonishment,
Long held in stupor
Stood fixed to eye her
Eurydice's drooper
Clutching his lyre,
Dumb flowers had spoken
And now this token
Of Fate ! Was it fancy ?
Or his mighty mother,
The Muse, no other,
This hovering pansy
Of the air, his pride
To quicken, inspire him
Had sent to fire him ?
At last he cried :

ORPHIC MYSTERIES

"O fairy forager
 Among fields and flowers,
That com'st encourager
 To my weak powers.
If thou would'st have me
 Go deathward, dare
In blind dusk grave me,
 Thou hush of the air
Say first how acquainted
With speech thou hast painted
 Mine ear that sings
As mine eye to the India
Than all winds windier
 Of thy gay wings,
Tell me how sprung
 This wonder, what bird of
Nor lizard I heard of,
 Articulate tongue.

From boyhood have I
 Felt thee, thou glory,
Paint to mine eye
 Elysium's story,
Of immortality
 Speak, and the shades,
Of the soul's reality,
 And dim other glades.
From thee in my sorrow
Hope did I borrow
 For Eurydice lost,
As oft as thy vision
Hath laughed to derision
 My soul grief-tossed.
And now, O strange,
 Com'st thou to instruct me,
 Speech-fraught, conduct me
Where wan shadows range."

ORPHEUS

Then the butterfly winger
Of the dells of Rhodope
To the high bard, the singer,
Son of Calliope :
"Breeds it thy wonder
That I the unfordable
River should sunder
Of silence, be audible ?
Thou who the nightingale
Pour her impassioned tale
In the darkness hast heard,
Known in the starry hush
Bleed, bubble her woe and gush
More than a bird ?
Hast on hills greening
Heard the dim cuckoo call
Answer the waterfall
And known their meaning ?

When wast thou heretofore,
Orpheus, e'er staggered
To ope the mysterious door
Of silence a laggard ?
Know what the sad winds moan,
What the wave whispers,
What breaks in the heart of the stone,
Of what leaves are lispers.
All the dim dreaming woods
Or healthy solitudes
Breathe and suspire,
Mystic earth-murmurs all,
On wild moors that wake and fall,
Speak on thy lyre :
In Dodonaean
Old forests what oaks complain,
What grieves in the sobbing rain,
Thunder's loud paeon.

ORPHIC MYSTERIES

Since in music the whole
 Sad blissward yearning
Of Nature, her soul,
 On the lyre is burnig ;
The surge of creation,
 Which rose like fire
From the blood drops, the passion
 Of Heaven, the all-sire.
When Time's stern duty
To earth bloomed beauty
 From the sea waves to sigh,
Life's frail endeavour
Toward the blue sever
 Of infinite sky.
Why should it crave
 Thy wonder, if foaming
 In heaven-flung homing
Wave calls to wave ?

The less that to urge on
 The heavenward ladder,
The world's life, burgeon
 Hope's blossom, gladder
Hell shades to uncover,
 Bliss to unkey,
Eurydice's lover,
 Thee, Orpheus, thee
The god's high auspices
Select, and the hospices
 Of gloom to show."
"Send me, high poet,
Haste me to know it,"
 Cried Orpheus aglow
Yet all perplexed :
 "How on such dread emprise
 I may from thee take eyes,
Flutterer, wind-vexed.

ORPHEUS

Tossed by each random gust
Ever to fly on
Like the blind wandering dust
Or blown dandelion,
Though dumb flowers yonder,
Roses that shed
Their petals, like thunder
Have pealed from the dead,
Bidding me dally not,
Yet may I sally not.
Thy summons imperious
From the high gods, unmarrows me,
Lifts my hair, harrows me,
Dread task mysterious :
The dark primal curse,
The rift that forever
Doth heaven from earth sever,
To think to reverse.

How should it fall to me
To lighten the load
Of the bowed Titan, all to me
Unreachable ? Broad
Shoulder stupendous
Pillaring on high
The star-sown tremendous
Deep vault of the sky,
Eternally in awful ire,
Starred with cold alien fire
Heaven looks down on earth.
She up with sad billowing breast
From his blood never at rest,
Doomed to bring forth
The puny, death driven
Life's swarm that vernaly
Afflicts her eternally,
Earth looks up at heaven.

ORPHIC MYSTERIES

Toward heaven's sad azure,
Which who shall untinge,
She seeks to raise her,
She fain would infringe,
Revoke Fate's sentence
With vain remorse,
Undo with repentance
The ancient divorce.
Zeus, Zeus whose sumless
Deep wisdom how plumbless—
Majestic patience
By help of Themis' sage law
Hath fixed and Nemesis' awe,
The world's foundation ;
Lest heaven to earth nigher
Rush down, hath upholder
Made Atlas' shoulder
Of the infinite Sire.

His vast head lifting
The high clouds above,
Through clouds that drifting
Around him move —
What galls his chained might and
What moves to vain ire
The sky stooped Titan,
Whose knees ne'er tire ?
Above him aloof and stern great belted Orion
He sees and the soft Pleiades and the lion
Their courses of old
Keep, and below him far down at his feet
The ever-recurring hyacinth and sweet
Fresh daisy and brooms, flowered gold
Of days, months, years
Pushed on by the strong wise hands of the
Horae,
Of lovely seasons the flowery repeated story
He sees through his tears.

ORPHEUS

From night's gloom mournful,
Dawn's lovely surprise
Rebukes his scornful
Sad mutinous eyes,
With the beauty amazes
The glory, the dew,
Wherever he gazes,
Of things ever new.
Woodlands of song-birds he hears and the bees
Humming in clover and the corn's rustling seas ;
Innumerable leaves
Whispering, and the far plover's call
On lone heaths till evening fall
His ear receives,
Till night once more,
Vast and mysterious descending with muffling
hand
Blinding the continents all o'er sea and land
Her hush restore.

Night's tranquil surrender
His chafed heart must tease
When day's broad splendour
Over lands, over seas
Makes leap to joy, labour
The footsteps of man
Whose life, death's neighbour,
Endures but a span :
Weak plaything of Titans once, he sees high moved,
Him now of sovereign, inscrutable Zeus beloved
And mighty Here ;
Build him lofty cities, with swift ships people
The seas to waft him over the unknown ripple,
The ploughland weary,
For earth's fruits abroad
Shoot, his quick mind by the Muses taught
to know ;

ORPHIC MYSTERIES

Half scale Olympus ; on the lovely
lyre-strings grow
Almost a god.

Him, too, this demigod of the dust,
Immortal of feature,
He sees good, wise or just
Like any creature,
Perish decaying
Like the leaves that fall
To the deaf tomb praying
That closes o'er all ;
Sees mankind the darling
Of Gods impearling
Toward immortality :
How one death winnows
Aeacus, Minos ;
One dark fatality
With the wheat-ear to go,
Sad harvest of Cronos' scythe
Threshed with the roses blithe
Hurried below.

Then a little aching,
Exorbitant burden
Of the sky's weight slacking,
He feels some guerdon
Of respite pondering
How all things as he
Slave the high thundering
Same awful decree.
How his chain's rankle
Frets every ankle,
How none can choose
But serve the impartial
Stern nod that doth marshall
The world's way : Zeus

ORPHEUS

Who bendeth still,
Under its natal curse
Labouring, the universe
To his sage will.

In patience he hardens
His strength, and grapples
His world-load, warden
The Hesperid apples,
Watchful the vernal
Gold gifts of Earth,
For Here maternal
To shield in her garth.
The dark double entry,
Careful to sentry,
Of birth and of death—
Down which sad Kora
With Hermes before her
Ushers all breath,
And by that other
Leads back the eternal ghostly seed
Of all things in hell's dark furrow hid
To life's glad mother.

How may I the holy hush
Hesperidean
Think to invade, and rush
Past Atlantean
Challenge sonorous,
Have the heart to dare
The outcry, the chorus
Of the Hesperids fair ?
'Orpheus, think'st thou to please
Hell's dreadful dieties
Doing this thing ?
Back from the world below
Whither thou too shalt go
Thy lost love to bring ?

ORPHIC MYSTERIES

Dare not the eerie
Murk threshold of hell rash barred,
Tread not the flowery sward
Of holy Here.

If thou shalt under
Yon dusk cavern foot
Hell's orchard to plunder
Of one lost fruit,
Thou the recurring
Great seasonal round,
Life and death blurring,
Shalt wholly confound.
But or ere thou pass us,
Great child of Parnassus,
Thou needs must stop
Earth's swaying body ;
The sun's orb ruddy
From heaven make drop.
Ere thou hast thriven
Atlas from Uranus
Shall wrench his nape, crash on us
The falling heaven.'"

So Orpheus before
The grandeur that called
Stood more and more
Lured and appalled,
The ambassador eyeing
Who winged from the gods
Summoned him crying
On the direst of roads.
She either large buoyant wing
Now shutting, now opening,
Listened half scornfully ;
While the first high poet pursued,
As lost in some dreadful wood,
His thoughts, then mournfully
Once more his fated

ORPHEUS

Strange escort, that oar of the air
So fragile, so dauntlessly fair,
Interrogated.

"Thou with me faring
Hell's dim plain to coast,
Where hope is despairing,
Where grieves but the ghost,
Declare it, confess it :
This quest of ours—
What will they, the blessed
Olympian powers,
When melting my Phrygian
Sweet strains shall the Stygian
Obscurity woo ?
Shall Thanatos gloomy
Smiling come to me
Death to undo ?
Or from torments they urge
Shall the Eumenides
Softened with Threnodes
Hush from the scourge ?

Their snake knots unadverting
Toward Hades liminal,
Bid seek day's laddering
Each lofty criminal ?
Let Peirithous go,
Bid Ixion leave
His swift wheel nor flow
The Danaids' sieve ?
Bid acre-spread Tityus
From torment piteous—
But hush, my soul ;
The terrors that ghastrine eyes
Afflict thee, far otherwise
Did'st thou control
When the lyre's voice heard
Argo through boiling seas.



ORPHIC MYSTERIES

'Twixt the Symplegades
Shot like a bird.

Eurydice's voice
Where pale flowers blow
And thin shades rejoice
Calls me I go.
What boots it to count them,
Far perils painfully
In thought surmount them,
Rather disdainfully
Face, when the coming hour
Bursting shall bring to flower
The loom of danger,
Taught in fierce moments few
What to speak, what to do,—
To death's look no stranger
Nor accustomed to pale,
I, who the watery world
From peril to peril hurled,
With heroes did sail."

With these words' bravery
The pallor chasing
From his cheek, the slavery
Of fear erasing
Each furrow of anxious dread
That corrugated
His brow, he prepared to tread
The steep path fated.
No gold fleece beckoned,
Nor with heroes to second
His way he tries.
But through perils ghostlier,
Alone, for a costlier
Lovelier prize,
He goes to ungloom
Eurydice dying
Before him, sighing
For earth's lost bloom.

ORPHEUS

THE JOURNEY BEGUN.

Gladly his awful guide,
Motionless, fair,
Orpheus' new courage spied,
His dauntless air :
From the loved mound admiring
How fast he took
His great strides lyring
Nor cast back a look
Up from the wintry stone
That hid the dear relics gone,
She rose like May
A-hover before him,
With wing-strokes to oar him
The sunset way,
Where Helios stalls
At evening his steeds divine
Neath Hesperus' tranquil shine
When black night falls.

Far off in the gloaming,
That furthest of lands,
Where Atlas doming
The blue sky stands,
She knew and the garden
Of Hesperus there
And Ladon its warden
And the Hesperides fair,
Awed aloof amongst Argos' rowers
Orpheus those wizard shores
Had glimpsed afar
Seen glimmer eternal gold ;
Atlas the heaven uphold,
Hell doors ajar.
From fluttering ahead

ORPHIC MYSTERIES

She now his strength to try
Forearm and fortify
Back hovered and said :

“What swiftmess, what fire,
What newborn vigour,
Lord of the lyre,
Uplifts thee ? Bigger
Than mortal I see thee
Like Ares, stride
The boulder strewn heath,
Bleak mountain side.
Already more distant, see,
The high snows of Rhodope
Behind us wonder ;
Broader the stream that stuns
Thy native glen now runs
Its foam-race of thunder.
I see the blue smoke
Fainter and fainter rise
There where thy cottage eyes
Its guardian oak.

And lo, what bewildering
Is this of the mist !
Eurydice's children,
Thy daughters ! Hist !
Tis Malissa shouted :
‘Father, come back ;’
Thy Lalage pouted,
She weepeth, alack !
Son of the lofty Muse,
Seed of almighty Zeus,
Argonaut famous,
Wilt thou not once return ?
Doth not thy sad heart burn ?—

ORPHEUS

Will the gods blame us ?
What tarnish were this
To haste back (their hearts must ache)
Bidding farewell, to take
One hurried kiss.

Not thine such part is,
I know thee well :
A hero's thy heart is,
However it swell ;
Though sweetly their image play,
Those young forms tender,
Thou dashest the tear away—
No weak surrender.
Thou shakest thy head haughtily—
'Twere poor thrift naughtily
The gold hours to squander,
Far as the sunset stalls
Of Helios where evening falls
Have we to wander,
Where stealing his dream
From under the silver roots
Of blue jagged mountains
Floats Tartessus' wide stream.

Thou too hast been there,
Orpheus, thou knowest
The dread sight, seen there
That shadowy coast.
Thee then the foaming oar
Of Argo well driven
Beached on those charmed shores ;
And the high will of heaven.
With souls of the Blessed
To walk with, caressed
By ocean airs soft.
Thee now where blithe nor ail
Nor storm is, what magic sail,
What oarage shall waft ?

ORPHIC MYSTERIES

Her heels Atalanta
Must loan thee to Kronos high tower
And mild Here's heavenly bower
And hell's murk to enter.

Or ever they sent me
Had the Muses sweet
Pegasus lent me ;
Their wing'd courser fleet
Swift were they yoking
To Calliope's chariot ;
With nostrils smoking,
No place to tarry at,
Pegasus' fiery breath :
He who the streams beneath,
Mountains and ridges,
Racing cloud, wind, and rain
Swiftly large leagues of plain
In a moment bridges
But the high Muse in dread
Thy mother, pang'd to recall
Bellerophon's rushing fall,
Forbade them and said :

'Sisters, forget ye then
In a task idle
How the brief sons of men
Nothing can bridle,
How their weak thoughts in vain
Ambition doth puff :
Never the timely rein
Never enough ?
Temperate Bellerophon
Who the fierce Amazon
Tamed and Chimaera.
Nay, Sthenoboea's mad
Offer repulsing, had
To heaven come nearer.

ORPHEUS

On Pegasus' fire,
Mounted for starry roads—
To be as the blessed gods
Aimed his desire.

Soaring the ether,
Grown half celestial,
He scorned the tether
Of things terrestrial.
Tame grew sweet loyalties,
Wife, children, hearth,
Poor the large royalties
Of human worth.
Alas ! that Pallas to sift
His virtue with perilous drift
His wild ear fired :
How the world's father long
Brooding a hero strong
For Hebe desired,
For her, whose bloom
Keeps fresh the eternal youth
Of the blue heavens sought in sooth
A mortal groom !

Nor Tantalus' fall
Remembering, nor Pelops.
Heaven's high starry hall
His proud thought envelopes.
Already the clouds above
He sees resplendent
Enthroned Zeus, Apollo, Love
Hebe transcendent
Suddenly thunder
Gloomed, muttered under
Lightnings flashed forth.
His sky-steed undutiful
Flung down the beautiful
Hero to earth,



ORPHIC MYSTERIES

Thence day, night, morn
Saw him in mad disdain
O'er the alien plain
Wander forlorn.

Pegasus easefully
Unyoke, at his manger,
On heaven's food peacefully
Let feed nor endanger
Orpheus, my gentle son ;
Let his wild fire,
Muses of Helicon,
On his own strength tire,
Only hands wise and strong
Like yours, glories of song,
Can bridle his force,
Guide rushing his fiery
Strong hoofs whose eyrie
Was the Gorgon's dead corse :
Far safer were it
To beg for my Orpheus
The dream wings of Morpheus
Or the sleep-god sweet.

Meanwhile thy lovely wings
Be soft shining candle
To torch him with flutterings,
The thought's swift sandal.
Or Hermes may yet
On the wind's back slide him
To the sun's gold set,
And to hell's mouth guide him :
As once on the wild windy air
Medusa's cold, beautiful stare
Perseus unfroze,
So now, when to vanquish the grave
From stony death all things save
My Orpheus goes.

ORPHEUS

No creature so frail,
Newt, blind-worm, deaf adder, toad,
But shall speed him and counsel and road
On Eurydice's trail.

Though the dark house of death
Iron laws uphold,
Murmuring that breath
Should its secrets behold,
Though hell to its centre
Blacken and Gloom
Deny him to enter
And Silence and Doom ;
Thou, beautiful envoy,
Fear not his convoy,
And escort to be,
Zeus who makes lawful
Hath nodded his awful
Stern brows that he
Be suffered to dare
With his sweet lyre thrilling
Down the unwilling
Abysmal stair.' "

"O thou Tiresias blind,
Counsellor, rarer
Tongue of the Muses' mind
Blissful wayfarer,"
So Orpheus addressed
His beautiful guide,
Floating all dressed
In midsummer's pride :
"How by such knowledge
Thou cam'st as to college
My footsteps and task,
Of hungry marvelling
Am I the starveling
To press thee and ask,

ORPHIC MYSTERIES

Of thy courtsey, pray,
 Unload me the history—
 How got'st thou the mystery
Of Death's dark way.

In a sun-drunk passion
 Of mirth and frivolity,
Outladying fashion,
 All June and jollity,
Thou seem'st the fresh darling
 Of summer's gay court,
With jay and with starling
 But fitted for sport.
Yet something forever
Far off and a-shiver
 With beauty serious
Makes thee thou vision of air,
A glory disdainfully fair,
 Awful, mysterious.
Of some strange world
 Thou seem'st the visionary
 Far splendour, a missionary
Of truths dim furled.

So well the tares for me
 Thou pluckest that smother
My hope's flower, and cares for me
 So my great mother.
Bellerophon erring,
 The ominous flashes
Dreadful, deterring,
 Recked not, the crashes
That warned him to make afraid
His heaven-storming escalade
 Recked not and fell.
But madness' entirety
This downward impiety
 This journey to hell

ORPHEUS

Seems, the vast roomy
Dim world with the throb of
My lyre to rob of
A cheek as bloomy.

Nor can I remembering
But ache, Pirithous
In dark fields decembering
To think of the valorous
Proud Lapithaeon king who went
Down braving with Theseus
The terrible murk descent ;
Nor back again issues :
Glued to a rock he sate
Aiming to violate
The sacrosanct bridal,
Which Cronos' scythe murderous
Thwarts with stream verdurous,
'Twixt life and death tidal
Of fresh flowers. Persephone
He had borne off with piercing shriek
As now my sad rose I seek
From the portals of ebony.

Fair herald, escort me not,
Too blindly daring,
On proud paths consort me not
With gloom and despairing,
His rock to sit upon
With the Lapith and ponder ;
Or like Bellerophon
Those grey fields wander
Ever with outstretched arms
Through darkness that no lyre charms,
Vainly to clasp
Eurydice's blissful shade,
Ever to feel her fade
Eluding my grasp.

ORPHIC MYSTERIES

Not impiously
 Seek I dusk realms forbid
 To mortals in shadow hid."
So Orpheus : and she :

"Who should the secrets know
 Of death and the hoary
Dim underworld below,
 Soul, and its story :
Than I who have dared
 In a chrysalis dream
To the brown world fared
 That blinds the sun's beam,
For this cause my worth to prove
Winged Eros, almighty Love,
 Gave me to ferry
Psyche's last journey dark
Downward, and help embark
 On Charon's wherry.
Her these my pinions
 Led on high embassy
 To know her parentage
In Death's dominions.

O'er cold Styx shuddering
 I led, the wan water,
With bright wings ruddering
 Persephone's daughter.
Is it a woman,
 Ghosts whispering said,
Who fairer than human
 Comes pacing the glade ?
As from clouds the pallid
Bright moon had sallied
 Sad, bright she came,
Touching pale helmless
Dead heroes and realmless
 Sad monarchs like flame,

ORPHEUS

With memory's effort vernal
Of old joys and strife
Their great hearts stirring, the wife
Of Love eternal.

And souls that purge them
Far down in Tartarus
And furies that urge them
Martyred and martyrs
Stood hushed, the orchard
Of groanings and languish
Sweetly untortured
Grew eased of anguish.

Down over the dismal
Sheer brink abysmal
She looked, to her eyes
Thrilled, yearned to her pity,
Heaved surging the city
Of dolour and sighs.

'What soft air is this
That blows,' they said, 'down the disastrous alley
Of desolate lost souls and stirs the valley
Of the abyss.

Persephone blissful
From her throne today
To serve the amissful
Walketh this way,
Of her hallowing purity
To throw the sweet veil
O'er shame and obscurity—
Softens our ail ;

Such noble presence is hers as hath the world's flower
Breathing ambrosial mercy to quench and o'erpower
Our rank misdeed,
As when with her lovely summons like hope's own breath
To outworn crime and wrongs atoned for she saith :
"Ye spirits that bleed

ORPHIC MYSTERIES

Dews of repentance,
Follow ; I usher the flowery surge of rebirth
Back to a purged new life and the beautiful earth,
Passed is your sentence."

So they in the bottom
Of Erebus cried
While the shadowy autumn
Of pale leaves sighed
Over her sombre cypresses black
And poplars that umber
The palace-ward track.
The heavenly changeling
Whom I was angeling,
Persephone mild
Knew and with laughing tears
Clasped to her bosom's spheres
Her long-lost child.
And drops like the spring
That gushes from hard rocks forced
Down the stern visage coursed
Of Hell's glad king.

Not for my summing
It were to tell
Of that home coming,
The joy though in hell I
A theme for Thalia
Were those embracements
'Twixt daughter and sire,
The mother's enlacements ;
Three days in the black towered palaces
Of Aidoneus from solemn chalices
High wisdom she drank,
Death's holy secret pondering.
By Elysian rivulets wandering
The flowery bank.

ORPHEUS

What her soul burned
 To know, life's lovely dominion,
 The mystery Eleusinian
From Persephone learned.

Psyche ere amorous
 Of life's source heard
And how soul clamorous
 In beast or in bird
Back to the heavens dark
 From whence it founts
Still the empyreal spark
 Climbs and remounts.
Death but hope's portal is
Through which immortal is
 Life's fragile upfiring,
And each metamorphosis,
Perfection's dream, Orpheus, is
 Even as thy lyring
From bass notes to high,
 Winged by the Cyprian
Up through all things to man,
A flame for the sky.

There on the swarded slopes
 Of the meadows of asphodel,
Wisdom's ambrosial drops
 I sipped too and treasured well
From the lips of Persephone
 In deep grass and thyme
All ear, with a company
 Of spirits sublime.
There happy Oedipus
With Antigone stood by us,
 Jocasta and Laius
And prophets and bards in bliss
Musaeus and Thamyris

ORPHIC MYSTERIES

And Amphiaraus, souls lofty fated
Whom their high sorrows made
Priests of the pensive shade
Heard with breath bated.

She told how the Father
Of all things above,
The world's life together
On the wide wings of Love
To lift it enskying,
Its frailty updriven
To the hollow sighing
Blue peace of heaven,
Kronos' dark folly
To mend, the holy
Sweet sister-espousal
With Here contracted, that she
Should the world's mother be.
At the blessed carousal
Should hostess serene
Sit with world marrying brows
Ladying the golden house,
Heaven's awful queen.

There were the gold thrones set
On sward Hesperian,
Heaped were the tables neat
By hands unwearying
Of the bountiful Hours
From fair Amalthea's horn.
Thither the powers
Assembled at break of morn.
Though it was morning's blush
Night stayed her trailing hush
Of silence and stars ;
And out of the brightening east
Came to the marriage feast
Quitting their cars

ORPHEUS

Helios a-quiver
 With beams and the orient Rose
 In whose arms Tithonous snows
With old age forever.

And down from her fading moon
 Selene slid,
Her love for Endymion
 No longer hid.
His great waves that paeon us,
 Atlantic thunder,
Came hoary Oceanus
 From dim caves under
With Tethys. And snowing afoam
Up from their watery home
 The ocean nymphs hied on ;
Amphitrite their fairest led
For whose love the great heart bled
 Of kingly Poseidon.
He with the daughters
 Of Nereus majestic
 Paced with the rivers all,
A pomp of waters.

And up from the greenness
 Of Erebus came
My dread lord in dimness
 Already aflame
For the flower-child of Demeter.
 Amongst the assembled
High gods I paled for fear,
 Already I trembled
In golden Demeter's breast ;
Like a cornflower I hid and pressed.
 Iron-sceptred and strident
Of step, he in sombre pride
Sat by the Thunderer's side
 With him of the trident.

ORPHIC MYSTERIES

Dark the air grew
Round him and all things took
From his sad frowning look
A funeral hue.

Nor slow were to gather
At the Kronion's right,
Who called him father,
The children of light.
Behelmed, omnipotent
Of wisdom the organ
Came Pallas armipotent,
Her Aegis, no gorgon
Adorned yet. And Artemis
Fresh from the morning's kiss
In woodland trim
With quiver and cheek aglow
From chasing the mountain roe
Wet from the stream.
After did follow,
New from the serpent slain
Whose bones bleach in Pytho's glen,
Flushed, radiant Apollo :

Truth's brightest burgeon,
Light's holy fulfiller,
Bard, prophet, surgeon,
Of darkness the killer.
Glorying his tresses laughed
Round the sun's ruler
Burning from Eros' shaft
Still and no cooler.
Sorrowing only,
Still to be lonely
Of Daphne turned laurel.
Yet now at the bridal fete
Hoping to terminate
With Zeus his quarrel

ORPHEUS

That Beauty should flee
 Fade from his bright embrace
 Vanish and leave no trace
But a flower or tree.

And for beauty to bleed
 In the dart of its sweetness
No less swift, for like meed
 Came hoping the Fleetness
World-tasked, the inventor
 Of the seven stringed lyre,
Guide, orator, mentor
 The shrewd son of Maia.
And after their leader fair
Stepped to a solemn air
 Singing the Muses :
How Zeus the Titans all
Down-whelmed ; Porphyryon's fall,
 Enceladus' bruises.
Zeus, Zeus they sang,
 The world's sire and Here mild ;
 All the Hesperian wild
With their sweet voices rang.

Of the rills that should gush down
 From Helicon streaming,
Mnemosyne's holy crown,
 On gold thrones dreaming
Sat calm Pirene
 The rushy, the willowy,
And pure Hippocrene
 And fresh Callirrhoe ;
Founts from whose bubbling cave
Should drink the inspiring wave
 All poets unborn.
They sat, where the bride to bless
August calm goddesses
 Had thronged to adorn

ORPHIC MYSTERIES

And help veil Here :
 Law-stablishing Themis wise,
 Strong, austere Nemesis
And the sage Moirae.

Props of power's harmony,
 Pillars serene
Of what the world must be,
 What it shall mean,
These for the Kronion's wife
 Night's children mysterious,
Spinsters of birth and life
 Of death the imperious
Shears. And the founders those
With Zeus of the world's repose,
 Their strength everlasting
Bent to upcaryatid
His lofty purpose hid,
 Or slow or hasting
With thoughts not idle
 They tarried in tranquil hope
 The bland and blissful scope
Of that world bridal.

There too Hestia meek,
 The hearth fire's glow,
Waited with vestal cheek
 Pure, cold as snow,
In her bosom's sweet sanctuary
 Fostering the holy flame
Which should the architect be
 Of nations and name
The Daggon-housed Scythian
And the Celt or Promethean
 All hinting fire.
She brought from Inachus' wife
Its soul cleansing strength and life
 Yet purer and higher

ORPHEUS

To burn. So hoped she
Nor bosom of Here's mind,
Feasting her throne behind,
Her chaste veil dropped she — :

But fairest of face was he
At the high marriage table
Who throned at the Kronion's knee
Sat, the insufferable
Burning, bright cause of things,
Whose might none narrows,
With waving wide shadowy wings
And flame-tipped arrows,
Psyche, thy lord is he,
Whose mighty archery
Those myriad fires
Kindled in heaven's wide breast
Over dark earth to rest
With bright desires,
The glorious line fruiting
Of Gods. For things sundered far
He draws near. All unions are
Shafts of his shooting.

Terrible, feared of all,
Since like with unlike he
Consorteth, tyrannical,
Triumphant, my Psyche,
Sat Love who makes teen and toil :
Than bright ice colder,
Who thy lamps burning oil
Felt on his shoulder,
Woke, and in anger bright
Left thee to wandering night,
Trial and labour,
He with furred glorious wing
At the bride-seat banqueting
Sat and his neighbour
As reinless to duty

ORPHIC MYSTERIES

The Idalian, through cheek and tress
Laughing bloom loveliness,
Fresh foam-born beauty.

She who, thy task-mistress,
That paled charm spiritual,
Envyng through toil's sharp stress,
Pursues thee with anger fell.
The Cyprian, her rosy will
Scheming to execute,
As from Idalian hill
Through gods her laughter shoot,
To heaven's queen her belt of charm
Had given in hope to disarm
Of his high bolts the Thunderer
Once more without robe to rain
Her bright fire, no Grace's train,
From wild force to sunder her,
All check disclaiming,
Discarding the holy hush
In naked glory to rush
The world enflaming,

But the Father unbeguiled
Of her craft was aware ;
On her throne grave Here smiled
Beneficent, fair ;
The mothering sovereignty
Of all things already
Assuming her secptre high
With regal sway steady
She grasped. Yet with wonder large
Her eyes grew, and from the marge
Of brows how spacious
A little her veil she drew,
While swelled her deep bosom, too ;
The cradle capacious
Of all life, creation
To lull with the milk of rest.

ORPHEUS

Thus over the murmuring feast
With soft elation

She gazed. For a spectacle
Up the high lawn
Sublime, delectable
All eyes had drawn.
'Twas the vast vision
Of Earth, whose sad
Fair apparition
The gods made glad.
Up from the valley dim
She had raised each glorious limb
From crags and boulders ;
Had loosened of Atlas' crest
Her tall head and billowing breast
And mountain shoulders,
Against the sky
She towered, and in flowery green
Vested to pace was seen
The banquet a-nigh.

(Unfinished)

LATER LYRICS



LATER LYRICS

APRIL

April delicious

Young, sunny maiden,
Arch, gusty, capricious,
With fresh flowers laden,

After dead winter long
Thrill us with sweet bird-song,
After dry March's drought,
Blow from thy rainy mouth !

Hasten to kiss us
With the fresh daffodil
Through and through golden !
On green bank, by every rill
Pale cowslips embolden,
And white narcissus
Make o'er his dreaming pool
His wan face beautiful
Hang like a lover.

Set for the honey-bees
Budding anemonies
And pink white clover.
Now on the greening leas
Hasten, Oh hasten up,
In yellow companies
The laughing buttercup,
And to the meadow-pomp
Lure, lure the children out.
In mad crowds with merry shout
To pull them, dance, and romp
By their glad nurses.
And fresh green sights to woo,
Thy lovely face to view
Lure, lure the poet too,
Humming his verses !

I will not praise thee, April, if thou spare
Of all thy stormy freshness, one slant shower
To take the grey east from the shrinking air
And slake the wind-choked miserable parch



LATER LYRICS

Of a bleak world that trembles out of March.
I will not sing of thee unless thou flower
Millions of daisies, hour by sunlit hour,
To jewel the simple grass out of the skies
With less cold, nearer stars, and make earth paradise.

Oh to be flowery,
Dripping and balmy,
Call up the showery
White clouds, an army I
Shallow and freshet flush
Green as the grasses lush ;
By shady soft degrees
Thicken the leafy trees
To reach out dreamily
Wall and lane over.
Till in fresh groves are heard,
In the green clover,
Warbling their lays each bird
Over and over
Curd wild brooks creamily ;
Let not the bulrush lag,
Quicken the flowering flag,
Till in reeds stilly
Soon the wild swan shall nest
Preening his dazzling breast
By the oped lily.
Make listening echo sweet
By the full waterfall,
Dimly and oft repeat
The haunting cuckoo-call.
With all that shady is
Hasten to bower the land I
Elm, oak, and tall beech grand
Of dim isles that lady is
Where greenness shall hover,
And where a tall thin mist
Rises, the green wheat whist,
Chatters the crake ; make tryst



LATER LYRICS

Fond lass and lover !
Haste, April, upon city streets to blow
Thy purest, warmest breezes ; fly beneath
The flower-girl's rags, poor beggary's basket stow
With lordliest gold of daffodils aglow.
I will not love thee, save with sighing breath
On pale, worn cheeks thou waft reprieve of death.
Come in a wash of fragrance, let sick eyes
See leaves bud, bird-song hear through windowed
paradise.



LATER LYRICS

AUTUMN

By thy wave I linger,
Silent stream I
Autumn's golden finger
Paints thy dream.

From the beeches falling
Down thy face,
Summer, past recalling,
Drifts apace.

Only mists rise stilly ;
A sad peace !
Dank earth yields no lily
Roses cease.

Here, where I sank lazy
Deep in grass,
No surviving daisy
Tells what was,—

Kingcup blaze of meadow
Cuckoo-call.
Is it all a shadow
I recall ?

Yet when down these reaches.
Swept with cold,
Scarce the wintry beeches
Durst be bold.

Windy magic struck us,
March's rod ;
Like sun-beams the crocus
Burst the sod.

And when April after
Showered the ground,



LATER LYRICS

Daffodils in laughter
Danced around.

Oh ! the crimson story,—
White and red
May-blossoms in glory
Too soon shed !

Scarcely May-time closes,
Burning June
Brings me her musk roses
And her moon.

Blue skies to embolden,
Hot July
Amid cornfields golden
Oped an eye.

Last, for fancy's yearning
Thought to save,
Her frail poppy burning
August gave.

Spring-time's lovely story,
Summer's dream !
Where is gone the glory ?
Silent stream !

Calm thy current flowing
Ripples on,
Pang nor memory showing
For what's gone.

Canst thou unregretful
Silent glide,
For no loved flower fretful,—
Flowers that die ?

For no sweet bird caring—
Birds that sang

LATER LYRICS

Lost musicians, faring
With no pang ?

Memory's sunken anchor,
Yearns my heart
Rusts and rusts to hanker,
Grieves to part.

Thou the present only,
Car'st to glass,
Feel'st nor reft nor lonely
For what was.

Art thou, solemn river,
Lethe's stream,
That there comes no shiver
O'er thy dream ?

Autumn melancholy
Mourns with me
Summer's spendthrift folly,
Spring-time's glee.

Gorgeous, trustful, tender
Autumn sighs,
Grieving to surrender
Pomp that dies.

Gone are all the glories.
Autumn, speak !
Where for what no more is
Shall we seek ?

Now in falling splendour
Every leaf
Fills the heart with tender,
Wistful grief.

Now with mists September

LATER LYRICS

Mournful is.
Sadly to remember
July's kiss.

Soon October stormy
Shall with rain
Through the bare trees o'er me
Weep again,

And November chilly
Brown leaves heap
For the dead year's stilly
Winter sleep.



LATER LYRICS

POPLAR, BEECH, AND WEEPING WILLOW

Shapely poplar, shivering white, poplar like a maiden,
Thinking, musing softly here, so light and so unladen,
That with every breath and stir, perpetually you gladden,
Teach me your still secrecies of thought that never sadden.

From the heavy-hearted earth, earth of grief and passion,
Maiden, would you spring with me; and leave men's lowly
fashion,
Skyward lift with me your thoughts in cumberless elation,
Every leaf and every shoot a virgin aspiration.

The blue day, the floating clouds, the stars shall you for palace
Proffer their cathedral pomp, dawn her rosy chalice.
Where the birds are, you shall throng and revel to the lonely
In the blue of heaven to spire and sway with breezes only.—

2

Beech, of leafy isles the queen, beech of trees the lady,
Soaring to a tower of sighs, in branches soft and shady,
You that sunward lift your strength, to make of shadow duty,
Teach me, tree, your heavenly height, and earth-remember-
ing beauty.

Maiden, would you soar like me, with day-upclouding tresses,
Beauty into bounty change, bend down the eye that blesses;
Make from heaven a shelter cool, to shepherd and sheep silly
Shadowing with shadiness, hot rose and fainting lily.

Through your glorious heart of gloom, the noonday wind awaking
In an ecstasy shall set swaying, blowing, shaking;
Leafy branches, in their nests set the sweet birds rocking
Till their happy song break out, the noonday ardour mocking

3

Willow sweet, willow sad, willow by the river,
Taught by pensive love to droop, where ceaseless waters
shiver,

LATER LYRICS

Teach me, steadfast sorrower, your mournful grace of graces ;
Weeping to make beautiful the silent-water-places.

Maiden, would you learn of me the loveliness of mourning,
Droop into the chill, wan wave, strength, hardness, lofty
scorning ;

Drench your drooping soul in tears, content to love and languish;
Gaze in sorrow's looking-glass, and see the face of anguish.

In the very wash of woe, as your bowed soul shall linger,
You shall touch the sheer, bright stars, and on the moon set
finger ;

You shall hear, where brooks have birth, the mountain-pine's
emotion,

Catch upon the broadening stream the sound and swell of
ocean.



LATER LYRICS

OAK, PINE, AND SILVER BIRCH

Oak, whose mossed antiquity stands leafily ashiver,
Oldest oracles, each dawn, in earth's ear to deliver,
From your whispering world of leaves, peace, peace is all
your paeon ;
Give me of your giant calm, the secret Dodonaean.

Boy, a gnarl'd root first strike deep in plain earth's
homely nature
Wrestle rude blasts, lift, like me, your storm-contorted
stature.
Sun, wind, rain, your thousand-ringed millennial girth
shall sacre,
Broad to fling a hundred arms and overshadow an acre.

You too vastly then, like me, tranquility shall city,
Home the squirrel, bower for birds the milllon leaves of
pity,
Greenly mistletoe for man the soul's immortal mystery,
Journal in your bark God's day, a thousand years of
history.

2

Lonely Pine-tree on the hill, of gloom divinely solemn,
Who so tall and straight and sheer your crown of dark-
ness column,
Teach me, tree, your trance of strength majestically
sombre,
Gloom-worlds Atlas-like to prop nor dread but love to
umber.

High above the deep sunk vale, and high the rich flats
over
Learn, sweet boy, to brood like me, the lonely hillside's
lover.
There, to all winds in your top, melodiously hearken :
Let your soul gloom earnestly and to its own self darken.
Brooding such a depth austere of gloom augustly tender,

LATER LYRICS

Shall the waste bleak moors inspire the wide heath bathed
in splendour :
You the cone-topped thyrsus wave of ecstasy shall
borrow,
Blackening to its tragic core where thought outshadows
sorrow.

3

Breezy Birch, who make yourself a wind-shook swaying
glory,
Throw up open arms in joy to catch the day's bright
story,
Moonlight's ever silvery house,—all windows, ne'er a
rafter !—
Give me of your sun-drunk heart, this holy blanch of
laughter.

Boy, an athlete spare like me, the mountain's hardy
scholar,
Grow, profusion chastely curb, and rank luxuriance
collar,
Open out your boughs like mine to take the cold pure
breezes,
Every leaf a dancing gem that light's own laughter
leases.

You like me shall toss your head in bacchanals of sun-
shine ;
Drink, nor melancholy be to quaff the charm of moon-
shine.
You on splendour's heart shall pour and every laughter
school in,
Silver bark, to drench in shine, leaf jollity to fool in.

LATER LYRICS

SONG OF BRITANNIA

Muse, who art quick to fire
At the least noble thing,
And frankest praise to bring
Upon the quivering lyre,
Why art thou slow to sing
Now, when the world beclouds
With battle such as shrouds
Earth in a mist of tears ?
For want of heart belike,
While thunder sings afar,
And even the bravest fears.
Seek'st thou a theme for song,
No fear can ever wrong,
No tears can tarnish—strike,
And sing Britannia.

Britannia the fair
Whom oceans girdle round
With hill and valley crowned
And purest wash of air
From her Atlantic bound,
What heaths so fresh as hers
With blossom ? And how stirs
The soft wind in her pines !
Earth's fairest isle, 'tis said,
Where all things lovely are ;
Yet beauty there not mines
Strength, for no cliff is there,
No headland calmly fair
But fringed with wild spray wed
To shout Britannia.

Britannia the strong,
Whom God designed should queen
The ocean plain serene,
Though threatening foes bethrong,
Whose fate shall not be long,

LATER LYRICS

While round her, every deck
Bristling with cannon, speck
The seas her angry fleet.
Not earth to dominate,
Not to embroil with war,
Tower they : 'its to keep sweet
The world's dear peace, they bulk
So with their silent hulk
In all eyes power, elate
To speak Britannia.

Britannia the free,
Of soil so virtuous, such
No foot of slave can touch
But walks at liberty ;
The staff she is, the crutch
By whom weak lands arise,
Who, nourished in her eyes,
Grow and shake off the sloth
Of old anarchic power.
Two richly tokens are
Of her boon influence both.
What man of Ind or Nile
That sees his fat fields smile,
But his lips burst aflower
To praise Britannia ?

Britannia the sage,
With her own history wise !
The stars were her allies
To write that ample page.
'Twas her adventurous eyes
The vantage saw, whence she
To this wide regency
Through acts adventurous won ;
And if from strife and jar
She keep, the secret learn
From her mild brow alone
How not the world to daunt



LATER LYRICS

Or power imperial flaunt ;
She makes the queen'd earth yearn
To serve Britannia.

Britannia the good,
With her own heart at school,
Whom flatterer cannot fool
Nor rebels sour, at flood
Her own strength taught to rule.
Hers are the mighty hands
Which o'er a hundred lands
Weave good from dawn to grey ;
Like fond words from afar
Hers are the wingèd sails
O'er ocean, words are they
Which in a moment bring
Her brood beneath her wing ;
And none so small that fails
To knit Britannia.

Britannia wide flung
Over the globe, its half
Her children, whether graff
Or scion mother-sprung
Sons, now to be her staff
When her path glooms, though Rhine,
Danube, and Elbe combine,
Of these, O idlest dream !
To reave her. Hers they are,
Roused ardent in her right
From Ganges utmost stream
Far as Canadian firs
And bush Australian ; hers
Joined now in Hell's despite
To help Britannia.

Britannia, the heart
And brain, which bulwarks power,
See at the crucial hour

LATER LYRICS

How well she bears her part !
From fields how peaceful flower
In millions, arms and men,
Which now she pours again
To those old battle fields
France, Flanders ; makes her star
Of glory, that she shields,
The weak, confronts the strong.
Brute force let others sing ;
She shows in everything
To her it shall belong
To be—Britannia.

Britannia sublime,
To flame in generous deed,
In others' cause to bleed !
So to the end of time
It shall be. Once she freed
The Iberian ; Wellington
And Torres Vedras spun
The lines of victory then :
Another Trafalgar
The bleak north seas await,
Where her fleet towers the main,
Each mighty battleship
Charged to the very lip
With thunder. Big with fate
They loom, Britannia.

1916



LATER LYRICS

ON THE CENTENARY OF THE PRESIDENCY COLLEGE

A hundred years ! The very phrase
Unsepultures the million'd dead ;
Three generations in that space,
Ghosts of the past, have breathed and fled.
Time shakes his hour-glass, and we slide,
We running human sands, away ;
Vain, individual atoms,—glide
From name and memory. But the play
Of his chance-reaping scythe stops here :
Our frail race flowers upon its bier,
Man, feeble man, who from his dark
Gets no more, can no more endear
To the stern harvester his year,
Than soaring eagle feels a spark
Of the eternal burn in him. Some ark
That may survive the flood of things
He fashions ; not for what so flies
His brief self, but that children's eyes
May see, and children's children, builds
In the void future. There on wings
Indignant Immortality
Lends him, in that abysm of time,
Where no sure certainty can climb,
He fledges his sheer hope ; where sings
Some torrent his lone fancy gilds
In mists, the everlasting snows
Above him, nests his brave repose,
High-eyried in posterity.
So thought, so toil'd, so built the men
Our founders whom to-day we laud,
Commemorate ; from now to then
Over a hundred years applaud.
To the true-hearted Britons praise
Those three ! from law and church who rose
And shop, this lasting fane to raise
For the lov'd Muses, verse and prose,
Thought. science, numbers : to enshrine

LATER LYRICS

Fair Learning's self, the lamp divine
In God's hand for mortality
To see by. Gulf of 'mine' and 'thine',
Though come from o'er the bitter brine,
They knew not ; no dividing sea
In race, pride, alien ancestry,
That with such cold estranging wave
Makes severance of us ; through our blood
Howls against human brotherhood ;
Than towering Himalaya more
Parts land from land ; as in a grave
Buries mankind's growth, to congeal
In icy barrier : which with ease
They leap'd. Nor could caste, custom freeze
Their fiery souls, those two, our brave,
Our native founders, who both bore
The name, and the large heart of kings.
To them, while all the patriot springs
To our lips, let the heart's thanks peal.
For they saw, those far-sighting five,
Or, dim-divining, surely felt
Shakespeare in Kalidasa thrive
In Bhababhuti Milton melt.
Through creed, race, colour they saw kin,
The bleeding ransom Calvary's tree
Shed for us, and what under this
Tathagata's thought-agony
Dropped in the dreaming bo-leaf shade
At Gaya. And as, never to fade,
What they in man's adoring soul
Hope, rapture, worship built, they made
Those Heavenly Founders, one and whole
Like some cathedral's vault to roll,
Or God's blue, o'er humanity
For all to breathe in : so divined
Ours, building earthlier, that mind,
Like soul (that catholic lesson) is
For all men ; spreads like empire free
This glorious fabric she uprears,

LATER LYRICS

Britannia. Under the third George
When she pent Europe's splendid scourge
In Helena, they, rapt to see,
Prophets, the large imperial bliss
To be now, when earth's peace is spilt
By a worse madman, rose and built
This structure of a hudred years.

1917



LATER LYRICS

POOL OF NARCISSUS

Come, Julian, flower to me of friends,
Myvanwy's brother, for whose sake
The sky so gloriously bends
And April buds their freshness take.

Today the hawthorn breaks a-flower,
Doff sadness. Come put on the mood,
Partake the sweetness of the hour
And melt into an April wood.

Though passionately lorn your air,
Your beauty, friend, recalls to me
Some Polycleiton figure fair,
Boyhood's divine cheeked purity.

The bloom, the strength, the lovely dew
Of youth the Argive sculptor felt
When bronze was beauty, lives in you
The dreamier impassioned Celt,

Through flower-like sadness you are Greek,
Hellas you love. And all the dream
Of nymph and god ; brow, lip you speak
Of the Palaestra and might seem

Some Dorian victor who has sped
Placing that parsely wreath his crown,
Who modestly the noble head
Bends as in melancholy down.

Look up, oh friend, and while we walk
Under the shadowy leafage cool
Of April woodlands let us talk
Of beauty and things beautiful.

The air of lovely legends old
Plays round us ; through this bowery glen,

LATER LYRICS

Immortal, fresh and virgin cold,
Might wander the fay Vivian

And Merlin with her. As they came
So blue a sky, so washed so clear,
Forests of Brocliande aflame
Hung fairily as arches here.

Smooth, silvery larch-stems one by one
Above us their gemmed branches shower,
Open their hearts out to the sun,
Make for fresh airs a swaying bower.

The tall beech, lady of the land,
Greenly begins 'gainst summer's heat
To thicken her umbrageous, grand
Cool armouries of dusk complete.

And the fair maple, autumn's rod,
Mightier than Merlin's, augurs now
Far treasures of gold to brood
And put forth on the prescient bough.

Only the laggard ash demurs,
And bare as when the winter moon
Blanched colder the snow-loaded firs,
Hoards beauty lusciously for June.

Ah what delicious wood-land spell
Leads onward our leaf-beckoned feet
Through forest ways adorable
As wintry Merlin Vivian sweet.

Under the poplar's breezy spire
Toward him she bent, his hand she took,
And magic hoary in desire
Caught in a labyrinthine look.

Mysterious nature dawned in power ;



POOL OF NARCISSUS

Divineness in the woods, no art
Could bind or yoke, in grass, tree, flower
Enchanted the Enchanter's heart.

For fresh as any rushing cloud,
Boisterous and fitful, warm and mild,
All spring time in her look was proud,
Unconquerably gay she smiled ;

Capricious, fair, a thing of moods,
The spirit of an April day,
That elfin glory of the woods
Seemed, that immortal happy fay.

He gazed into her fadeless eyes
And up the flowery Breton lawn
Into her forest paradise
Still deeper, step by step, was drawn.

At every step a blossom sprang,
And old age to sweet boyhood back
Blithelier with every bird-note sang
On that irremediable track.

With a triumphant look she led
The wizard saturnine and sour
In immortality to bed
And dwell with daisies hour by hour.

She draws us Julian, yes 'tis she,
Her glorious gaze invisible
Charms in a flowery ecstasy
Our foot steps to the secret dell.

That inmost and mysterious glade
Of April's forest witchery
Where rock and pool and flower and shade
Guard Merlin's grave for you and me.



LATER LYRICS

See, marshall of the hidden way,
The flower that came and lingers still,
Victorious, golden-hearted, gay,
Cold March's windy daffodil.

Sudden in gusty March they shone
And linger with their flaunting hood
To pomp the lovely April on
Into the heart of Vivian's wood ;

Sunshiny finger-posts to bliss,
Her wayside sentinels, they stand
Pointing the path where joyance is
And laugh us into fairyland.

Oh haste ! the hawthorn as it blows,
Winter a folly, death a scorn,
Shouts with her mimicry of snows
And bids us mock the mortal thorn ;

All in a forest glamour witched
Bids enter the inviolate spot
Where earth's life shadily enriched
To greenness grows, a daisied thought.

Primroses paling to pure bloom,
The cheek of beauty's perfect all,
Speed us where hushed in holy gloom
Sweet beauty dwelleth virginal,

Imperishably young and fair,
Past summer heat, past winter blast—
Hope's ever opening bud is there
And happiness forgets the past.

Thither as we invade the hush
With piercing note the blackbird calls,
And that way, throaty, rich, the thrush
And linnet tune their madrigals.

POOL OF NARCISSUS

They to the covert guide our ear,
Those bursts of music here they shroud,
Bower-fellows of the budding year,
And with their song the wood is loud.

Mount with me for the mystic glen,
Solitary, sequestered lies
From the profaner gaze of men
Along this rock-strewn precipice.

Up the steep hill side's stony face,
Grasping the hazels, let us mount
Over wet stones where foaming race
The torrents from their lonely fount.

Of the dim cavern's gloom divine
Down-murmuring, awfully they speak,
The solemn guardian grove of pine,
The still pool and Narcissus' cheek.

Whether a nymph's or of the fays
The grotto be, I cannot tell ;
Holy alike to Grecian lays
And old romance is that sweet dell.

Though foot-holds scant the crags impart,
Give me your hand, take mine and we
Climb perilously to the heart
Of mountain-cradled Arcady.

Yet higher and the tops are seen
Of those tall brooding pines austere
Whose noble attitude o'erlean
The place of mystery, beauty, fear.

Thence listen as to voice and mood,
The stillness, the divinity
That breathes and broods in hill and wood,
In rock and slope and flower and tree.

LATER LYRICS

Comes that way from the dingle deep
The torrent murmur musical,
Falling forever through a sleep,
Of the clear, sounding waterfall.

And clearer, thrilling to the heart,
The woodland calling sundered man
To melt in mountain, be a part
Of nature and eternal Pan.

'Tis the loud cuckoo doth rejoice
Silence, our very souls to woo
With landscape's solemnizing voice,
To the hill's heart and forests too.

'Come hither bard, and take new birth
With lonely echo in her cave,
Voice the profounder soul of earth,
Drink from her rock the living wave.

Sweet madness shall the nymph inspire,
Thou from the lonely heart of things,
From inmost beauty, shalt take fire
From truth's core, Pegasean wings.

And come lovelorn young athlete sea
Thy face in water, beautiful,
Bloomed upward with Persephone,
Lean like Narcissus o'er his pool ;

Mirror youth's glory, be a flower
Pure, solitary, still, divine,
Cold Amaryllis, for an hour
Forget love, langour, fever, pine.

Strayed sheperd's who the unlovely world
Would quit and lost Arcadia
Visit, oh haste I in leaves be furled
Poet and youth, this way, this way I'



POOL OF NARCISSUS

So she, the haunting mystery
Of spring-time, so the cuckoo bird
From Argolis or Arcady
Sends loud the lovely greeting word.

And to enchantment far withdrawn
Waving o'er us on either hand
Beckons the fresh, the fairy lawn
And forest tops of Brocliande.

This way, the breezy rustling seems
To whisper, here wise hoary truth
Softly, inviolably dreams
With the joy-breathing heart of youth.

Lead poet, lead the beauteous boy,
Where the enchanter Merlin won,
Lapped in a daisy trance of joy,
From grief and age oblivion.

To the indwelling soul did he,
Of woodlands here, that happy fay,
The spirit of immortality
And beauty, give his wand away,

The sage wand at whose waft of fear
Cloud-kissing Camelot rose, and all
The dream-bower made for Guinevere
King Arthur's glamour haunted hall.

Vain magic and enchantments vain
From Arthur or his peers to stave
Strife, battle dolourous and pain
From Merlin withering and the grave.

His wand he gave her. In this glade
He buried lies, the daisied plot,
Go, see and be yourselves waylaid
By the sweet witchery of the spot.



LATER LYRICS

Whatever beautiful wan knight
From Arthur's court by forest ways
Comes wounded, for a lady white
Under green leaves to lose his days.

Be he so mad as Tristram was
For Iseult's loveliness of yore
Or bleed he as did Pelleas
In vain, or burn as Pellinore,

Here shall the deep wood cover him
From Love's intolerable wrong
Encased in leafy armour dim
To grow fresh hearted, whole and strong.

Thus oldest oak-glooms overhead
Out of their gnarled antiquity
Wise immortal whisper shed
To urge us on the path of glee.

Needs must we hearken, needs must we
Follow, for woeful hearts to lead
With holy whispers and to fee
Past winter wind, past thoughts that bleed.

Not sager oracle were they,
The glorious dead grandsires of these,
Deemed prophets by the Druid, gray
Majestic acre-shadowing trees

Whose winter straining arms all bare
Mournful in wind and heaped with snow
Eternal springtime did declare
Hid in the green fresh misiltoe.

Taught by a sprig they ushered then,
Our Cymric sires as now they do,
Our footsteps to the secret glen
Or if the cuckoo call be true

POOL OF NARCISSUS

Dodona's thousand whispered oak
Might this be, which with leafy tongue
Of glades hyperborean spoke
Where all things are forever young.

Thence airy voices cry upon
Our glad Persean thoughts this hour
To bind the wingèd sandal on
And fly beyond the North blasts power.

And see Apollo's golden isle
And mix in mirthful revel there
Where spring doth into summer smile
With those hyperborean fair

Young men and maids. Rose-garlanded
There in the glorious dance's whirl
We, too, the unfading sword shall tread,
Have speech of bloom-cheeked youth and girl.

Phoebus' sage votaries. There shall we
At inspiration's Delphic eyes
Know from divine lipped poesy
All that is beautiful and wise.

Come hither, from triumphant lyres
I hear the ushering paeon sung
And stepped to by Phoebian choirs,
Those ever vernal robes among.

Come hero langorous and love lorn
Of passion and disdain and fear,
All the frail tissue, thin, outworn,
Slough on the flowery meadows here,

Whether of love the crimson spurt
Thou dolorously and afar
Come trailing or in battle hurt
Some fair young king, the wounds of war



LATER LYRICS

Here dipped in Aganippe's wave
And streams that to the Muse belong
In clear, cold wisdom shalt thou lave
Healed by the sanities of song.

Such wafted greeting on the breeze,
Though dreamlike, 'tis no fancied call,
Be it but from the rustling trees,
Birds' song, or brook or waterfall,

Invites us. Only swallow-swift
Over this ground as it were air
The winged strokes of your thought uplift,
Some wonder shall surprise us there ;

What of hyperborean bowers
The Greek sang, what romance has spun
Of wounded Arthur laid on flowers
In valleys of Avilion,

It shall be ours to wrestle to.
Ah I smile not Julian I 'Tis not mine
Your melancholy soul to woo,
But sky, hill, valley 'tis divine,

'Tis mystic Nature's mighty All
In whose majestic retinue
Her lovely pomp processional
In soul we follow, I and you.

Hark I 'tis the solemn cuckoo still
Yonder in the pine-tops averred
This glory, as we breast the hill
The rallying sweet shout is heard.

I speak as the interpreter
Of wise tree and of bird and flower,
But you, in your blood the dim Celt feel stir
To Nature's magic voices too.



POOL OF NARCISSUS

I see the cloud lift from your brow
The loud clear cuckoo-cry to hear,
Your springy steps the charm avow
With flushed cheek airily you clear,

No longer sad, no longer pale,
Light hearted dweller as it were
Of some divine Arcadian vale
You bloom back to Hellenic air,

Heart-free as love were but a toy,
And youth it's own frank careless bliss,
Your mate the Attic hunter boy
Disdainful of Aurora's kiss.

Oh I be as I would have you be
On this delightful April day
And see as I would have you see
Only the sweet foretaste of May.

The shadowy overhanging glade
That eye and heart at once bereaves
Of all but greenness, all but shade,
Or what is leafier than leaves.

Were lovely tresses ever hung
The glorious covert of a face
Than these in hovering beauty flower
Over our heads as on we pace.

Or to companion the lone hours
Could any maiden fairer be
Than all these bloom-cheeked way side flowers
That walk and bear us company,

Eyes of a heavenlier caress
The trembling blue-bells on us turn
Fairer than lady's fingers press
Upon our hearts the uncrumpling fern.

LATER LYRICS

To cover us from passion quite
And bathe us in the dew of things
Trees under us and flowers invite
And the grass calls and cuckoo sings.

Ah ! yet the impassioned Celt you fire
To nature's breathing mystery
As in Irene you suspire
All that is rare and rich and she.

Repine not then if you be Celt
Or if you soul back to the Greek
But in the lovelier hedgerows melt
The damask of Irene's cheek.

All that impassioned fancy's trace
In her cold maidhood, here entomb
In nature's bountiful bland face
Her prodigality of bloom.

1923

(Unfinshed)



LATER LYRICS

ALBION

What is that noblest grace,
Isle of the free,
I would forever trace
Britain in thee ?
Is it thy aspect then,
Calm, rugged, brave,
Home of courageous men
Set in the wave.
Tall cliffs whose loom and tower
Lonely through mist and shower,
Wild with the sea gull's cry
Rampart and ring with power
Thee O Atlantic bower
Of eldest liberty.
When spake the primal word,
"Britannia be I"
And joy-hushed angels heard,
Thus walled he fortified thee ;
With steep rocks he garrisoned
And round thee from verge to verge
White steeds he caparisoned
Thy army, the shouting surge.
But thee O queen he wrought
Out of his sunniest thought
Like thy fair cliffs in hue.
A candour of fearless right
He gave thee, and gentle might
And eyes of kindest blue.
Already in thee he blushed
Thy far dreamed progeny,
Who have thy glory branched
And budded o'er land and sea,
No tyrant Napoleons
To guard thy tranquil seat
But temperate Wellingtons
And Nelsons brave and sweet,
Those white towers befoamed at base

LATER LYRICS

Have served thy foes to chase
That thou mayest Ocean rule,
Isle of the angel face,
And in thy footsteps trace
All men in freedom's school.
White ways to walk, O Queen,
A stainless course to plough
Blanched he thy face and mein,
Chalked he thy brow.
Therefore is it my heart
Thou hast enthralled,
Therefore it is thou art
Albion called !

Yet chalky bourne for thee
Is there no need
Nor foam based cliffs to be
Britain indeed.
When from the continent
The eternal hand
Shivered thee first and pent
Lonely and grand
Tall woods of noble yew
Crecy and Poitiers knew
Stored he thy lap withal,
And ribbed the mighty oak
Charged with the canon stroke
To be thy wooden wall,
Rigged, taught, a cloud of sails,
Frigates thy men of war
O'er oceans hollow vales
Winged thy steps far ;
Under thy banner strong
White peace unfurled
To plant, and trample wrong
Over the world
That thou might'st walk elate
Peace, order, freedom great
Sowing o'er land and sea.

ALBION

Tall ships thy fortalice
Gave he to be thy bliss
Mother of liberty.
Far at the world's coign placed
From Europe, Asia
Sundered by surges' waste
To loom the hazier.
Twice from the brumal mist
Didst thou emerge
Louis' antagonist,
Napoleon's scourge.
Blenheim and Ramillies
Europe's rent families
Together compact anew
Joined, and from loud alarm
Hushed back to peace and calm
Trafalgar, Waterloo.
He to o'erwhelm proud might
Blazoned thy face so fair
To shield the opprest, so white
Hung he thy cliffs in air,
Therefore mankind's own heart
Thou hast enthralled,
Therefore it is thou art
Albion called.

O isle of peak and glen
And cliffs that shine
And meek and maid-faced men
With the heart leonine,
Thee when the heavenly power
Designed to people
Ocean in happy hour
Heard, and far ripple.
Tall Jute the billows fall
Flowered thee, and Saxon tall.
Nothing were ribs of oak
Without them, or cliffs in air
Hung white, those faces fair,

LATER LYRICS

That freedom loving folk.
Such stuff as never yields
The frank fair faces came,
Earth's flowers, to fill thy fields
And the orb tame.
Yet through what rack and woe
To build the race he sought,
Laboured the wisdom slow
Of the eternal thought.
Disastrous history bled
To piece out every thread
Till woven, through dark Pict ran
And shy Celt's dreamy fire,
Dane, Viking, the entire
Strong perfect Englishman.
O shiftless Vortigern,
O isle deep forested,
That saw camp, city burn
When Rome-left weaklings fled.
Yet rude force, honesty.
Hearts gentle, souls not base
They brought, the proud blue eye
And the fair foreign face.
Through the barbarian mask
Flashed upon him his task,
Angels, not Angles said
Gregory, and God's own word
And holy Austin spurred
To thee, fair isle, he sped.
From thy white cliffs since then
To what land have not borne
Great meek-faced angel men
Christ and man's heavenly morn.
Therefore the world's glad heart
Thou hast enthralled,
Therefore thou rightly art
Albion called.

Then from thy mighty pulse,

ALBION

Isle of the free,
From rude strength to educe
Honey from thee,
This, for thy soul's white dower,
With ships he gave,
The lion heart of power
And the ruled wave.
Tall spires that cleave the skies
High domes bowed heaven-wise
Humbly thy soul bade pile ;
High arched cathedral dim
Pealing in praise to him
Who made thee lovely isle.
Since first was sent to thee
In Glastonbury vale
The man of Aranthee
With soul-salving oil.
Thou, to defend the right,
Infamous wrongs redress,
Arm'st every burning knight
From Lagress, Lyonesse ;
Arthur in thee sits crowned
And his fair table round
Sends on their peerless course
In freedom's cause and Christ's
Dear shining evangelists.
Livingstone, Wilberforce,
Howard whose gentle heart,
As large as Shakespeare's, knew
His own, all human smart
And to the prisoner flew.
Ever since dandled thee
Was in Iona's barn
The sweet babe, candled thee
From surge beat Lindisfarn.
Mild Alfred, lonely and great,
Hopeful in adverse fate
Makes in thy heart his realm.

LATER LYRICS

Ever St George from thee
Lorn Sabra rides to free
Coeur-de-Lion dons the helm.
Thou puissant isle well knowest
Humbly to glass his power,
Righteousness make thy boast,
Mercy and truth thy bower.
Therefore the unseen heart
Thou hast enthralled
Therefore in heaven thou art
Albion called !

Surely the awful hand
Dowered with the cross
Leads thee, triumphant land
Through gain, through loss,
Toward the hid purpose far
Guiding thy lofty fate
For which through storm and war
Skiddaw and Skawfell wait ;
Tall on Plynlimmon's top
Dreams it thy mighty hope
For which austere rose
Bold Snowdon, and to climb
Toward which Nevice sublime
Heaved her eternal snows.
Peace, justice, law, wide wings
To work out his intents,
Thee, nurse of sapient kings,
Mother of Parliaments
Threading the mystery
And dolorous romance
That poms thy history
With tearful circumstance.
For its sake William
Must the the torn compact claim
Only to weld thee whole ;
And anguish arrowy
Seal Harold's darkening eye

ALBION

August laws to ensoul.
Dead Harry's, Edward's brood,
In solemn Westminster
The aftermath of good
Reaped by the blood-stained spur.
Listening what swan song pealed
Wild Wales to melt in thee,
How Ireland's welter healed,
Ambitious surgery.
Under the chancel frets
Haughty Plantagenets
Dim bones of monarchs dream
What urged thee and urges still
Isle of the fiery will
To glass god's starry scheme ?
Not though thy scutcheon blot
Stayed'st thou for harrying
Strife, wars to pleach the knot
Sweet sister marrying.
But stars with peaceful heart
Saw joy enthralled
The aim for which thou art
Albion called.

What ample voice was heard
On what far wind
Britain, which thy heart stirred
Four realms to bind
Ere Tudor, Stuart, proud
To freedom's haughtier curb
Stooped, to thy ear came loud
The ample sound superb.
Foam crests whose steepy roar
Chides the Hesperian shore
Beckoned thee wave on wave.
Sheer peaks the day-dawn fills
And gorge split Vindhyan hills
Called upon thee to save,
Earth's plough-worn, ancient lands ;

LATER LYRICS

Continents lone and waste
Beckoned with hoary hands
Praying thee come in haste.
Thyself tasked, from thy fist
Raleigh and Drake at Spain
To let fly, to resist
Towering Armadas vain ;
Through bursts of orb-wide song
That Shakespeare sang, cam'st strong
The vext globe's yearning cry,
Savage or slave, to find
From thee at either Ind
Light, succour, liberty.
California's red-wood tree
Through whispering Colonnade
Sighed its appeal to thee
And India's Banyan glades.
In thyself labouring,
Freedom's banner, thy boast,
Eternal glory to wring
From Charles, at what dear cost.
Thou with the future big
Didst freedom's new life rig
Wafting for earth's avail.
This way the May-flower, pent
In it a continent,
That way the corded bale.
In both world's thou at length
Didest Sakespeare's soul engraft
Both, with thy triple strength
Rose, shamorock, thistle staff.
Therefore the morning's heart
Thou hast enthralled
Mothering, at sunset art
Albion called.

O blest isle of the free,
O mother fig,

ALBION

Hasting to droop from thee
Daughters as big.
Wings to thy shoulders then
How swift to imp
Wast thou, O crutch of men
And lands that limp.
Tall over parting seas
Grew those Atlantadies,
Lovely and puritan
Infant Columbia first
Suckled by thee and nursed,
Simple, republican.
Never had'st thou let rip
The natal-cord, nor they,
Had not ill-statesmanship
Blundered and dotage grey.
Vainly thy own voice pealed
In either mighty tongue
Burke, Chatham ; history reeled
When that disruption sprung.
Earth shuddered ; thou elate
Proud prescient of thy fate
Heard'st the far rustling palm
Cry thy great oak to wive,
Thou heard'st, interpid Clive
Plassey sowed India's calm.

(Unfinished)



PART II

IMMORTAL EVE

(Songs of the triumph and the mystery of Beauty)

*O reader, you who curious are
This sobbing page to ope
Writ with the ink of sorrow, pause ;
Defer all easy hope.*

*The cry that from some sailor breaks
Borne lonely without end
O'er waste seas here shall smite you, make
To God your soul commend.*

*It is no fiction, no sweet tale
Romantic, you shall read
The bitter truth that two hearts felt,
These verses sigh and bleed.*

*But if you, too, some lonely sea
Wafted from all men's sight,
Read, read and weep : for in my own
Your history I write.*



IMMORTAL EVE

1

Over me God's last splendid dream,
Me, Adam, cherubim
Shouted and in their Maker's praise
Sang, "Glory be to Him !

Lo, crown of creatures to our trust,
Sole, unpaired masculine,
He gives in fellowship august,
Man the last work divine,

Our scarce inferior in sublime
Ascension to endear
Birds, beast to angels, earth to heaven,
Creation's scheme ends here."

So sang they. I, though glorying
With angels to be sib,
Panged with the want of you felt throb
Wild heart 'gainst lonely rib.

2

The blissful cohorts urged me : "Why
Tranced by Euphrates' brink
Stand'st thou, Adam, in sweet awe
To be, to breathe, to think.

Why ling'rest thou irresolute
To pace forth and make climb
In adoration up to God,
Heavenward with front sublime.

Go forth with sovereign eye and awe
The lion's ruthless nerve,
And the wise lordly elephant
Docile laborious serve.



IMMORTAL EVE

The ox to patience yoke. Why stay'st
From thy majestic fate,
O thou sole lord of paradise
Created without mate."

3

"Joint-labourer with his mighty sun
Go at the high command,
As brightly God's beneficence,
Companionless and grand,

Shower on the wilderness. To turn
All into garden, go,
The wild tree shall thy pruning hook,
The vine luxuriant, know.

With the rough elm for marriage thank
Thy thrifty art ; to teach
Her clusters fruitfulness, begin
And graft the sweeter peach.

Go, earth in flowery beds and knots
Laid out in order trim
Shall praise thee as the star-sown heavens
Do their Creator hymn."

4

So with sweet spur, harmonious urge,
To enter Eden bade
Singing angelical the hosts
Of heaven. I, loth, afraid

Stretching for what dear other hand
I know not, backward hung
Worshipping my Creator, proud
Myself to be, yet stung,



IMMORTAL EVE

Lured, wistful. Heavenly faces fair
And nature's spiritual
Smiled welcome, to sheer spirit would run
The heavenward animal.

I sighed. That moment my own face
Glassed in Euphrates' flood
I saw, though higher far than beasts,
Coarse, earthly, faunlike, rude.

5

I gazed with angel faces thronged
At human lineaments
First seen, nor self-admiring awe
Nor scorn, but wonder thence

Rather, astonished question drew
Why that rude satyr face
Down creeping kindred of the dust
Imaged with such dim trace

Those heavenly features. Half abashed
My whole beast ancestry
Remembering, near that rough mask
Mirrored I chanced to see,

Feel Eden's first flower of a face
Bloom lovelier than its own,
Whisper that other face which soon
Should queen creation lone.

6

O miracle of God's wise hand,
O fragrant mystery,
Beautiful, silent face that hangest
Half human on thy tree.



IMMORTAL EVE

What art thou that all grace dost breathe
And to my spirit tell
Of unknown beauty, sovereign charm,
Bloom, shape ineffable ?

Then sang an angel, "Wond'rest thou
To see it blush and tower,
Breathe sighing odour to thy heart,
That, Adam, is a flower."

Rose of the world ! Your infinite
Sweet fragrance then was shed
Around me. In that thornless flower
I first to beauty bled.

7

The great sun over Eden flamed ;
He burst with ray-crowned face
Rejoicing in his might to run
Her sixth day's glorious race.

How like myself alone in her
He westered with his rays,
Creation as the garden, I,
Life's master, lord of praise.

He seemed the gold god of the skies
From whose warmth nature drank
Joy, power and holy sustenance ;
But when majestic sank

His bright orb, I in darkness soft
Stood awestruck, the mystery soon
To see in heaven God's passionate
Pale, tender, radiant moon.



IMMORTAL EVE

8

High on the slopes of Lebanon
The mighty cedars towered
With far flung arms in terraced heights
Of glorious verdure bowered.

It seemed to the aerial snow-peaks,
Snow-loaded, they aspired,
Winds in that labyrinth were lost
I stood and I admired.

Smiling in aweless sovereignty
Within my soul I felt
Gloom, grandeur, such gnarled rugged strength,
Such spacious pride, nor knelt

To worship. "Thy umbrageous self
Rooted in calm behold
Adam," I said, "Thy thousand years
Shall snow thee thus when old."

9

"Me from the cold austerity,
Grandeur of his lone thought,
A thrilling solitary peace,
The heavenly Maker wrought.

Shy to be wed, hush'd cool withdrawn
Yet with soft veil for thee
The bareness of God's awful thought
The sky, I canopy.

Waste, homeless mountain distances
Wall, and the fierce noon dark
In green translucencies of day,
Thee, the earth's god, I ark.

IMMORTAL EVE

In sylvan holiness of shade
With universal pang
To house thee, did I root the wandering fire,
The fever that is man."

IMMORTAL EVE

II

1

I, the first man, the majesty
Of creatures, Time's tall birth,
Spring at God's finger-touch erect,
Glorying upon earth.

Above me the blue solemn heavens,
Around, the sun, the shade,
Green, whispering, glorious wildness,
I knew for me were made ;

For me all broad Euphrates flowed
As stooping down I quaffed
Water's triumphant glory : winds
And waves, for me they laughed.

And the first bird sang piercing sweet ;
Leaves danced ; the rose its new
First odour infinitely breathed
For me—oh, where were you ?

2

You, the first woman, who should bloom
Out of creation's bud,
Perfect the six days' handiwork
And show that all was good.

You were not : yet your fresh idea
Made leafier greenest shows,
Haunted the silence, something rare
Augured behind the rose.

In all things, pure streams, mountain grand,
Sky, valley, clouds that roamed,—
One awful sweet foreshadowing,—
The world to beauty homed.



IMMORTAL EVE

And something flowerier than flowers
And dewier than dew
Foreboded uncreated Eve ,
Thrilled Eden through and through.

3

The freshest of the cherubim,
When I paced forth to see
Eden in my first natal hour,—
Two angels went with me,

Wonder and Rapture. To my soul
God's fair works Wonder showed ;
And fairer, far more glorious,
Through Rapture's eyes they glowed.

Perfect, profound, mysterious, grand
Was all t'wixt earth and sky ;
A miracle the mighty scheme,
And the chief wonder, I

Bowed, worshipping the sovereign hand,
Marvelling. full of pride ;
I kinship with the glory owned,
Yet, why I knew not, sighed.

4

Joyful, sufficient to thyself,
An image of the power
That made thee go domesticate
The brute, and train the flower,

God's gardener, upwards lift ! For friends,
Companions from the sky,
Angels shall visit thee and raise
Thy soul with converse high.



IMMORTAL EVE

Invisible or dim-perceived,
Oft in the cedar walk
Perchance at cool of eve with thee,
As friend with friend, shall talk

Thy heavenly Maker. Eden shall
No desert be, nor lack
Sublimest friendships. For whose hand
Lookest thou, lingerest back ?

5

I roamed through Nature's paradise
Tired, pensive, solitary.
Seeking you, Eve, in shapes I clothed
Cloud, water, crag, and tree.

For the whole sympathy of heaven
And earth into the mood
Seemed wrought of that divine idea,
The image I pursued.

Now through the wave diaphanous,
A Naiad to my hopes
You shone ; a swimming glory rose
Showering the water drops ;

The cloud wraith of your loveliness
Floated in every breeze.
Sprung on the hills an Oread ;
A Dryad peered through trees.

6

'Twas in a valley first I thrilled,
In tranced wonder, Eve,
Hints of your softer majesty,
Your sweet strength, to perceive.

IMMORTAL EVE

From the elm's leafy loftiness,
The poplar soaring fair,
Ash, beech, the willow's bending grace,
The woodland goddess there

Limbed into loveliness.—I gazed,
The souls of those fair trees,
Unbarked, disbranched, and, what they were,
Shy gentle Dryades,

Approached me ; calm tranquilities,
The spirits of the wood,
Shadowed my heart with peacefulness,
Hush, coolness, solitude.

7

O ye whose fair umbrageous forms,
Though softer, seem allied
To mortal, glories of the glade,
What are ye, speak ! I cried.

Your sky-embowering holy shapes
In shadowy secrecy
Seem to breathe joy and peace. Ye drop
Large leafy thoughts on me.

Hovering, yet motionless, ye stand :
Speak ! Language seems to start
From those soft whispering lips, like leaves
By fresh winds blown apart.

Creation's hopeless quest I seek,
The softer Adam, bliss,
Undreamed perfection ; which of you
Creation's glory is ?

IMMORTAL EVE

8

Then one, the elm t ee's shady soul,
Rooted in loftiness
Immovable. "In my large height,
Adam, thy dream possess.

The skyward ivy of thy thoughts
Clasping my bark, let stand
Earth fixed for ever in my shade,
Thy darkness cool and grand,

Heights upon heights of bowery, fresh,
Soft-hanging shelter shall,
Fretted with sky-peeps, lure thee up ;
And strong boughs, lest thou fall,

Support thee. Root thy finger's clutch
Into my stem, this pride
Of rough-barked grandeur, shadowy grace,
Nor seek another bride."

9

She smiled. That sovereign stature next,
The lady of the oak,
Seemed over Eden broad to stretch
Her shady arm. She spoke :

"If grandeur, not sole height, thou seek,
Thy acre-shadowing glade,
Enter this Dodonaean girth,
Millennial, undecayed.

Here shall the eagle of thy hope
Rest wings ; here, one by one,
Thy callow aspirations fledge,
Imp pinions for the sun.



IMMORTAL EVE

Hyperborean doves be here
Prophetic, and when snow
Hoars nature, cut thou, Druid-like,
The immortal mistletoe."

10

I, Adam, I, who felt you, Eve,
My halved self, other heart,
Under my rib, diviner far,
Yet like in every part,

Answered : "Too mightily ye tower,
Too broadly do ye space
God's roomy dim idea, for me
Your sweet glooms to embrace.

The leafier leafiness of you,
Your whispering soul of peace,
Lies far beyond my grasp, that dusk
Of shadowy secrecies.

Virgin to your vast grandeur cool
Remain then, solemn trees,
Image your Maker's holiness
And sway but to the breeze."

11

Oh lady of the rugged knees,
Whose vast girth hour by hour,
Gnarled, knotted through a thousand years.
Beneath the hand of power

Swaying, the blast and hurricane
Of the creative thought
Which gloriously to quiet gloomed
Thy acre-shadowing plot



IMMORTAL EVE

Of million whispers, still be thou
All day earth's conopy.
Glimmering and rustling, drink all night
Dew, darkness from the sky.

God's day of thousand years for him
Date thou, with annual bark
Ring upon ring, that he from thee
An æon sped may mark.

12

And thou, whose soaring heights of shade,
Thick-leaved, though rough thy rind,
Must effortlessly tall have climbed
Out of the heavenly mind.

Let the low ivy round thee ring
Her thousand fingers high,
Take tremulously undismayed
Those blue peeps of the sky ;

Still let the poise and grace of thee
All day his thought embower,
Height by degrees ascending soft,
The placid ease of power.

Oft shall the Maker, visiting
Eden, with thee hold talk,
Thou whisper-laden majesty
Who crown'st the garden walk.

13

Around those sylvan goddesses
Awful the stillness grew.
As back into their branching glooms
The holy shapes withdrew.



IMMORTAL EVE

Once more to leafy loveliness
They limbed ; I, solitary,
Stood panged with alien beauty, lured,
Fretted, a hushed cold tree

Wishing myself. Could I so stand,
Said I, O Dryads fair,
Whom the all-sapient heavenly hand
Rooted to rise in air,

In mossed contentment here would I
Anchor. A restless heart
He gave me, see, and wandering feet,—
Desires that shoot and dart.

14

Vaguely dim shadowy hints of thee
Spurred me, yet I delayed
'Twixt lofty elm and glorious oak
In that sequestered glade.

Here should her stature limb to life,
Here leaf her lovely hair,
Yet yonder on the lawn I spy
Her cheek, and eyes how fair.

Creation's wonder, where lurks she ?
I questioned ; in these bowers ?
Or in that deep grass virginal,
With faces that are flowers ?

As thus I lingered to be gone,
Answering my very thought,
I heard a soft still voice ; it seemed
The spirit of the spot.



IMMORTAL EVE

15

Yes, the divine soft solemn soul
Of Nature in that place,
Its genius, its embowered whole
Of earth, sky, tree and grass ;

All that of loftiness had gnarled
In branching attitudes
High over-arched, that noble grove
Trained out of many moods ;

In heaven's tranquillity above,
The cold still ground below,
Its pensive self to think and breathe
Its dim self love and know ;

What voiced in landscape, God's vast peace
Just there, from depths of shade,
The woodland's dreamy heart profound,
"Adam," it called and said :

16

Creation's wonder and thy wife
Here selfed in landscape, see !
Soul of thy soul, thy fairer self,
Virgin I wait for thee.

With hilly and encircling sweep
My solitary arms
Reach out, to fold thee to my heart,
This breezy dusk of charms.

This leaf-stirred forest, whose fair brows
Whose heaven-deep eyes how fair
Leaned down to shadow thee, and shroud
With verdurous wealth of hair,

IMMORTAL EVE

Beauty, that glorious thing thou seest
Shyly, invisibly,
To wed thee waits, this maidenhood
Of greensward, tree, and sky."

17

"No longer fan thy heart's pent fire
That fair invisible
To find, nor with an image seek,
With a dream-face, to dwell.

Could she be lovelier, thinkest thou,
The soft majestic she,
Than this calm glorious face of things
That smiles for ever free ?

The heart of nature, pure and warm,
Offered thee glad and near
Tranquillities of noble form
And secrecies of fear.

Peace and pure solitude am I,
Stay I fairer shalt thou find
None to companion thy lone thought,
Balm, solace thy sad mind."

18

"What shape art thou ? And whence proceeds
Thy solemn voice ?" I cry,
"Divine soul of this valley soft,
Who fain wouldst be my bride.

Thy secret, shadowy charm I feel,
Like a cool finger laid
Upon my throbbing heart ; thy voice
I hear my haste upbraid.

IMMORTAL EVE

Come forth, twilight oblivion
Undraped, and her sweet form
Show me, that lovelier self I feel
Under my heart's rib warm.

Thou, glorious valley, well may'st limb,
Thou forest, body forth
That splendour, fairest of God's works,
Perfection's sovereign worth."



IMMORTAL EVE

III

1

If when through God's profusion vast
Of virgin wilderness,
Stormed at with bloom, with beauty stung,
I strayed companionless.

I, wandered from God's hand that hour
A few steps, needs must find
Perfection in those first fresh things,
Nor knew what lay behind.

Enraptured if these first sweet steps
Without you seemed the toy
Of new waked wonder, like a dream
Hovering, the tree a joy.

A miracle the common day,
A glory the plain grass,
These prime works were the rudiments
Of what should all surpass.

2

Dear, could the wise Creator make
Me, nor imagine you,
When from his wisdom's awful breath
I came like trembling dew,

You under my heart's rib I felt
Shiver and sparkle sweet,
With my first shock of being pulse
Your starry infinite.

Already in his thought you were
Enfolded like a bud,
Fragile and feminine, man's flower
And Nature's crowning good ;



IMMORTAL EVE

Could He without the glorious stars
Make hollow heaven alone,
Make yearn the sad wave, and no shore
To break its heart upon ?

3

Out of no mortal womb you came,
No weak flesh fathered you ;
Perfect from the Creator's hand
You leaped into my view.

You have no frail contemporaries,
Before you there was none
Nor shall be after. You alone
Walk, breathe beneath the sun.

To be the bliss of loneliness
Your solitary eyes
Came with the pang of onliness
To deepen solemn skies.

Flesh of my flesh, bone of my bone,
Close as that rib to cleave ;
God made you one and sisterless,
Incomparable Eve.

4

Dear, in your lovely majesty
Single on earth you stand ;
You queen creation, birds, trees, flowers,
Hold Eden at command.

For you God made his awful heavens
To bend your head above ;
Against its spreading vast expanse
Solitary you move



IMMORTAL EVE

Lone empress of his paradise,
For you it was create ;
And earthlier Adam, I, to be
Your rude inferior mate.

I and the world to worship you,
You the divine the one ;
To outshine angels, Lilith shade,
And make all others none.

5

God walks in Eden in the cool
Of evening. Rise, my sweet
Forth, and with heart-felt humbleness
Our heavenly Maker greet.

To fence you, stronger far than oak,
Taller than mountain blue
He made me : fairer than all flowers
To charm me he made you

Out of my heart's rib. Over us
His awful heaven he spanned,
Clustered his starry Pleiads soft,
Belted Orion grand.

Now shuts the daisy's eye ; toil done
Remember whence we came,
All Eden now in whispers sweet
Breathe the eternal name.

6

It was all darkness, all blank space
Void was my spirit, love,
Till o'er the primal nothingness
You brooded like a dove.

IMMORTAL EVE

Then first the dull, still notes of thoughts
At your fair eyes took motion
And silence at your voice first woke
To musical commotion.

You filled the vacant universe
Of my created soul
With glorious thoughts that round you run
And sway to your control.

A million thoughts you kindled, love,
A million wandering fires ;
And still they roll around you, love,
My dreams, thoughts, joys, desires.

7

When God made Man, could they suffice
Those two his boundless love,
Who sowed earth with a million flowers
And spangled heaven above ?

Not great stars, not the vast of heaven
His love might sate, express,
But in the speedwell's blue he dreamed
Infinite littleness.

So when with worlds unsatisfied
Creation's mean he planned
In splendid Adam, when to charm
Eve softened from his hand.

He in the vastness yearned with things
Yet tenderer—his Power
To sweeten, and the globe left blank
For childhood's helpless flower.



IMMORTAL EVE

8

Heavenward she looked and saw the fruit ;
Beauty athwart the sky
Provoked her heavenward hand to pluck
And know and grieve and die.

Against the childhood of her bliss,
Simplicity so sweet,
She dared transgression, but 'twas love
That Adam, too, might eat.

Eat and in knowledge still toward heaven
Together grow like gods,
She knew not that temptation came
From bottomless abodes.

The beautiful archangel fallen
Who since the world began
Drags, ever plunging toward the deeps,
The falling wave of man.

9

Wavering I stood. In her fair eyes
A lovely daring shone,
Her whole soul's beauty smiled and glowed,
Unblenched she becked me on.

Sole woman in the waste, sole bliss
Created and for me,
She knew my lonely heart nor shunned
Temptation and the tree

And I,—bone of my bone she was ;
While in dark self I slept
From dream and yearning vision made
Eager to her I leapt.



IMMORTAL EVE

Out of each other framed for each
Our destiny we dared ;
Expulsion and the flaming sword
Threatened, yet on we fared.

10

Aware of peril we sprang, we fell
Into each other's arms,
Even then in tears the rapture wells,
Even then the terror charms.

That first sweet timid kiss I We looked
Upward and were afraid,
'Twas Eden round us, God was there
Yet fearful to invade

The loneliness with such a thing
As love, the virgin hush,
Waste Eden's whispering secrecy,
We tremble and we blush

To look upon each other then
We sunder heart from heart.
We sundered long. 'Twas sweeter so
To gaze and stand apart.

11

Beauty, it is the brief glad rose
Whose petals fence our youth,
That primal garden—'tis no tale
Hedged from the world's wide truth.

Still in the virgin glade of things,
Creation's new-made life,
They stand with whispering beauty charmed,
The husband and the wife.



IMMORTAL EVE

Secure of Adam, fenced with bliss,
Innocent what could move,
What impulse, Eve to taste and know
Her mortal nature prove ?

All that in woman is divine,
Love, mighty love ; dim-furled
Man's race within her, and without
The whispering unknown world.

12

Truth the wide all, untilled, unknown
It beckons. We our youth,
A garden, but a vernal dream,
A part must leave for truth.

Was it our pride to venture, risk,
Youth's error that we ate ?
Could paradise be found too sweet,
Or joy unbroken sate ?

Still in the salt foam of ourselves
In sorrow we must fall,
Our briny briefness dash in tears
On God's lone rounding all.

To dig, to labour, sow our sweat
And childbirth's tender curse ;
All painful history unborn,
But two blest, had been worse.

13

The tearfulness, the smart in things,
In which immersed we moan
Upon God's plumbless, unknown sea
So bitterly alone.



IMMORTAL EVE

'Tis but the sad estranging salt
Our briny nature's mesh
Whence heavenward lifted each toward each
We rise and fall afresh,

Fall from our skiey paradise,
Her Adam guiltless Eve
Must tempt, life, beauty, love to know
And with a fruit deceive.

Bone of his bone, flesh of his flesh,
His rib's created sweet
She holds the apple out to him
—Our nature incomplete.

14

Far mountains unapproachable,
Stern and aloof, yon blue ;
Sad, solitary range I and we
Alone in Eden, two I

Beautiful, homeless wilderness
Around, waste skies above ;
Stung by his lonely star-fires, two
To hunger into love.

This grandeur as in granite cut
The world's face. Two to press
Shivering for love, warmth, each to each
In nature's loneliness.

He zoned us with disdainful things,
Cold and austere to make
Tremble to each two hearts, and fear
Each other to forsake.



IMMORTAL EVE

15

This fragile ineffectual being
Ever on point to be,
This present passed how soon to sigh
And mourn with memory.

This windowed house how beautiful
Whence ever we look out
On large horizons grandly lured
Yet fear and wince and doubt.

Out on the perilous great world
To feel, to think, to live,
What shy horns of experience we
Push forth, how sensitive

The spirit in its frail shell housed,
That fortress, from all foes
So snugly sheltered that the gates
On prisoned self must close.

16

God made the world for me, for you,
That his dream-paradise
Re-imaged in first freshness, two
Might see in either's eyes ;

Revive lost Eden, fence out all
With forest, mountain-high ;
Yet through our leafy garden close,
Its whispering secrecy,

The giant ages murmuring,—
Strife, hatred, anger rude,—
Faint, far-off, like a rumour strange,
Alarm our solitude.



IMMORTAL EVE

We hear it ; smile, yet fearfully,
As 'twere the serpent's hiss,
Bosom to beating bosom, crush
Our wild heart's lonely bliss.

17

In the beginning when he burned
Out of primaeval night
The shadow of his brooding dream
God said, "Let there be light."

He spoke. And through the grieving huge
Disdainful, ancient Dark
Suns, constellations woke to light
From Love the central spark.

From vastness yearning to find shape
Life, movement, you and me
Light he conceived and warmth and joy
The primal Mystery.

Why then this chill in Love that was,
Beauty that ever is,
Why from each shape this shadow cast,
This cloud that bourns all bliss.

18

Since from his sorrow we to joy
Sprang forth, from dark to light
We, too, the twilight of that dawn
Must share, Creation's night

That trembles when the sky first pales
To joy, the still cold birth
Struggling with night and apathy
When light ensouls on earth.



IMMORTAL EVE

We too must shiver when love dawns
In the pale light to feel
Slowly the dreadful birth of joy
From eldest darkness steal.

The sorrowing primal night of pain
From which the worlds travailing
Into conception, coldly dawn
Love, daylight everything.

19

Shadow that dogs man's sunbright form
The dark mysterious shape
That idly mimics what we do,
Ancestral like the ape.

Even such a shadow, fate, life casts :
In the strong noon of will
It dwarfs to nothing, shrinks away
But lurks and follows still.

To our soul's substance 'tis akin ;
Though prostrate still our doom
It walks forth in our will's decline,
Our languor makes it loom.

Even in the sunrise of our hope
Backward we look and see
Ancestral night whence we emerged
Cast shadow threatningly.

20

Ah in our beauteous self-made prison
Through bars clung to, so tight,
The blue must yearn us, to look forth,
Love's skiey infinite.

IMMORTAL EVE

A wild sweet daring rushed through me
When first her face I viewed
The love storm brooded when she paled
And trembled to be wooed.

Yet from the virgin hush of her
Her beauty's dreaming shade
Mysterious, awful, though my fate
Cried out, I shrank afraid.

And she too, did she tremble then
With love and tears to mate ?
Lured by each other's sun we feared
The shadow in our fate,

IMMORTAL EVE

IV

1

I think God meant that youth should fire
To beauty, his bright dream,
That with his pomp of loveliness
Our passion too might stream.

So flowery He the pitfall makes,
So sure he sets the gin,
Some glorious purpose beauty hides
To have our hearts fall in.

What are these mighty heavens he pranked
With stars ? What azure day ?
What sunset ? What this orb of things
This rondure ? Who shall say ?

I know that to besiege my thoughts
Your face he framed so fair,
Tangled so rich and massed like storm
That purple cloud of hair.

2

God's dream, oh primaeval Eve
So nobly you renew ;
All countries, climes, the continents,
The ages melt in you.

In you to that first archetype
Divinely plain, the race
Runs back and unsophisticates
Itself to fearless grace.

To that calm grandeur Adam knew
Your largely moulded earth
Leads us, the primal womanhood
God meant, that flowery birth

IMMORTAL EVE

When our first mother virgin fresh
From God's own awful hand,
Sprung elemental, pure, sublime,
All beauty nobly planned.

3

Yoke swiftly my soul to beauty's car
The wingèd steed of verse,
She goes to vanquish and to charm
A willing universe.

She goes the world's dear conqueror
Her beauty's worth to rain,
And capture with her lovely looks
The rampart of disdain ;

Her smile so rare an archery,
The sallies of her eyes
With brightness 'neath the lifted lash,
With sweetness to surprise.

Before her brow's imperious worth
Must every heart fall down,
And her the rose of creatures call,
And beauty goodness crown.

4

Why do I sing your shape and hue,
Your lip, brow, cheek, those frail
Perishable adornments, sweet,
Robes that your beauty trail ;

That wardrobe Nature loaned you — grains
Of matter can they have
Such power within their sensuous net
My spirit to enslave ?

IMMORTAL EVE

Ah, love, I know your soul's unveiled
Sheer beauty shall some day
Strip off their lendings, paltry jewels
Thrown back to dust and clay ;

But since they dress you, since you shine
Through form, eye, musical
Through speaking bloom their worth divine
I sing and ever shall.

5

I babble, love, in useless praise,
Alas, 'tis willy nilly,
'Tis not to gild refinèd gold,
'Tis not to paint the lily.

Your truth is beauty. The bare fact
Yourself is praise enough,
You silence comment. Yet are you
Of very dreams the stuff.

You hint the mighty world. Your face
Beauty's arch secret is,
With your suggestions infinite
My thronging thoughts you kiss ;

In the white light of utter you
All other glories sleep,
I your perfection do but prism,
I make the colours peep.

6

To hint the hundred things you are,
The world's variety,
Riches I ransack, to declare
What 'tis you mean to me.

IMMORTAL EVE

You mean to me the summer's rose,
The damask and the musk,
The fullness of a star's repose,
The fragrance after dusk ;

You mean the swell of the sea wave,
The rain shower, the moon-beam,
Earth's rich smell, all that's languageless,
Sighs, music, memory, dream ;

All heart can think or tongue can tell,
Or eye or ear explore,
Of Nature's magic infinite
You mean,—and something more.

7

Perhaps the littlest charm you have
My tongue shall some day reach,
Learn fully to articulate
In faltering phrase and speech.

Meanwhile the murmurs infantine
I lisp from beauty's book,
Stammer sweet unknown sentences,
Spelled somehow hook or crook.

With painful efforts on my lips
I strive to mould, pronounce
Rich words of import dim and strange,
Your beauty's holy dance.

I cram and con you ; nor the road,
The royal short cut see,
Is not the world's worth all it means
In one word, Emily.



IMMORTAL EVE

8

The graces that your steps attend
Are these immortal three,
Who robed and girdled beauty's self
New risen from the sea.

In you the rondure, opulence,
Its rich bloom to repress,
Something severely lovely comes,
And keeps down all excess.

In you the brightness glorious,
The sheen of beauty's day,
Is shaded softly, temperately
Cool'd from the ardent ray.

And mirth itself becomes you so
It seems that every grace
In artless nude simplicity
Went with you pace for pace.

9

Come from the shade Democritus
And laugh once more with me,
And teach me of your atom world
No vain philosophy.

Thalia dimples in her cheek,
Her smile's Euphrosone,
Out of her eye Aglaia
Darts brightness. But she, she.

She is the lady of all charm
In whom all graces meet,
Breathing love's self, Idalian,
She beauty is complete.



IMMORTAL EVE

Yet Paphos knows not of her ways ;
Cynthia cannot tell
Where she, the world's adorable
Haunts, chooses, loves to dwell,

10

What moved the Maker to compose
Her face like some perfume,
Distil each feature from rich flowers
And mantle in such bloom ?

To cast those lovely limbs of hers
As, twere the soul of shape,
And in pure lines of mountains grand
And valley soft to drape.

Her soul, truth's beauty infinite
What moved Him to adorn
All richly clouded up from sight
In rosy mists like morn ?

For had he left her only soul,
Fashioned the world to feel,
With her divineness, her plain self,
Would be all beauty still.

11

The flowers in whispering rivalry
Once of my lady talked,
Claiming the nearer kinship each
As she amongst them walked.

"See you not of my blood she is ?
She blushes", the rose said ;
"Nay", said the lily, "She like me
Was of a moonbeam made".

IMMORTAL EVE

"Of sea-foam rather or of snow",
A hawthorn spray exclaimed,
"She stars my glory", the daisy cried
"Name me and she is named."

So others quarelled ; Flora said,
"Your wranglings vain compose,
Of all flowers was she made the flower,—
Pink, daisy, lily, rose".

12

Lilies are lilies and no more ;
The rose is just a rose.
But your sweet loveliness to find—
Where is it ? No one knows.

Not in your face, that paradise,
I find the sovereign spell,
Not in the gardens of your cheek,
Brow, chin, does beauty dwell.

Vaguer than violets, your eyes
Dim sweetness oracle,—
Breathe of a flower more lovely-rare,
Fragrance ineffable !

The rubies of your lips were mined
From richer depths below,
The lily and the rose of you
No white, no red can show.

13

Carve, sculptor, that fair brow of hers.
Let sunny candour there
Speak, and the soul of all kind thoughts
Charmed, brooding, debonair.

IMMORTAL EVE

And chisel me the lovely lips
Where laughter's dreaming hush
Lurks, her soft smile and tender words
In eloquent ambush.

And let the ripe cheek moulded be
Not too long nor too round,
Such pure perfection model me
It shall seem beauty's bound.

And O her eyes ; carve, carve them, too,
If to your art be given
To cut in marble dreaming lids,
Large lids, and eyes like heaven.

1

Your face the essential vesture is
Of your soul's beauty. Who
Dare murmur that those dainty robes
You wear, become not you ?

Your cheek is clad in cramoisy,
Your brow in satin sheen,
In a deep damask go your lips,
And velvet's on your chin.

But O, what texture, thinnest lawn,
Are your eyes of, or fine
Muslin to seem diaphanous,
Love, to your soul's divine ?

There beauty's utter mystery
That has nor shape nor hue,
Your soul voluptuously unveils
Its glory and shines through.



IMMORTAL EVE

15

The marvel of God's handiwork,
When of her face I think,
Outshines all wonder with the thought
Of whiteness her to link.

'Twas not complexion ; fair she was,
The lily had not shamed,
Though fairer, to claim kin with her
Nor marguerites have blamed.

She laughed, it was a silver note,
She smiled, it was a ray,
She looked, and from her eyes there broke
A dawn to freshen day.

Snowflake and swandown, I have seen
The candour of their white,
Her soul's simplicity it was
Laughed out and blanched the light.

16

For colour to his great design
The world, this landscape sheen,
Blue to his sky, He gave, hope's hue,
To earth his soothing green.

That we might look up, dream, aspire,
He painted blue the heaven,
To balm and solace our hurt minds
Green to the earth was given.

When you He made, that painting rare
For eye and soul's delight,
As largely, love, He schemed you out,
In glorious black and white.



IMMORTAL EVE

White, dazzling white, He made my day
Your brow no sun to lack,
To rock me in his own rich night
Your tresses raven black.

17

O fair as hawthorn buds are fair !
O pure as privet meek !
With thy complexion shall I dare
The snowdrop's spotless cheek ?

She winnowed whiteness. Radiance' self
Had touched the common day,
Silvered the world with some rare dawn
That was her spirit's ray.

The laughter, the simplicity
Of sunlight, what is it ?
The rainbow's glory of all hues,
The candour infinite !

So the eternal soul-blanch, she,—
Olympus' awful snow,—
To sheen to mortals, took life's prism,—
Sped Iris-like below.

18

Who is it talks of ebony,
Who of the raven's plume ?
The glory of your tresses black
Will yield to neither room.

So thick the ambrosial dusk of you
Glooms in your looks, soul, sight,
The world itself is swallowed up
In darkness and delight.



IMMORTAL EVE

Tell me no more that black must be
Light's baffle, colour's loss.
Your tresses shoot into the sun
A richly purple gloss.

It was the sunshine white of you
Which cast that wealth of shade.
There from the burning light of you
The world and I am laid.

19

When in these limpid depths I gaze,
Those wells of undefined
Mysterious lustre, your fair eyes,
I dazzle stricken blind.

Is it the moonbeam sleeps within,
Or sunbeam laughs without,
Or star-fires hang they, heavenly sparks,
I waver still in doubt.

I grope in some diviner day
That mocks my stumbling sight,
In labyrinthine glory stray,
Mazes of living light.

Eternal day-dawn waits me, I
Through darkness and through dew
Like blind Orion reel to reach
The morning that is you.

20

Tell me what sage astronomy
May fathom those fair eyes,
Where still profounder depths elude
And show yet deeper skies.

IMMORTAL EVE

There, past the eagle's sparkling wings,
And past the swan I soar,
And past the Pegasean flight
Those heavenly deeps explore.

The glorious arch of streaming looks,
Your spirit's milky way,
Love, I have dared, and dreamed beyond,
With these poor eyes of clay.

Yet never could I gauge as yet
The distance infinite
It takes one heavenly look of yours
To shine down to my sight.

21

The violets unforgettable
Of those dark lovely eyes
Upon my spirit vaguely bloom,
With colour tantalise.

I strive to paint on baffled sight
The mystery of their hue.
Black are they, pansies of delight ?
Black ? purple ? darkest blue ?

Those undeterminable hints
Are colour's sanctuary,
To hide from us inviolable
The world's dear mystery.

What spirit, the angel of your eyes,
Sits there invisible,
Their infinite deep shining darks
May hint, but never tell ?

IMMORTAL EVE

22

Dear, when I look within your eyes,
What heaven do I see ?
What starry glorious universe
That gazes down on me ?

Infinite distance there I see,
And soaring oft see burn
Orion with his belt severe
And sworded brilliance stern ;

And oft to baffle sight almost
Radiant and soft, while flees
Their dovelike shimmer, pèers the host
Of the sweet Pleiades ;

And then, when tender gloaming dusks
The evening of your eyes,
I see the lonely star of Love,
The planet Venus rise.

23

Sometimes those gentle eyes I love
A haughty beauty show,
'Neath either eyebrow's glorious arch
So goddesslike they glow.

Sometimes they gleam, Titanias
Arch, wayward, witching, bland,
They ravish fancy, rock on flowers,
Transport to fairy land.

Sometimes like angels out of heaven,
The heaven of their dark spheres,
Balm to my wounds they minister
And wipe away my tears.

IMMORTAL EVE

But always whether proud they show,
Wayward or kind, I see
One starlike stream of influence
That sways my destiny.

24

The rainbows of eternal peace
In your eyebrows condone
Mankind and with their glorious span
Replace in Eden lone.

Under these clement arches wide
I see in your fair eyes
Serene, the sad past bloom forgiven,
To beauty re-arise.

The race re-mothered in your eyes,
In you the ages all,
Antiquity—Greece, Carthage, Rome,
Attuned grow musical.

Rent history, those two, Abel, Cain
Sweet bloodless refuge find
Clasped to your bosom once again
O mother of mankind !

25

Your eyebrows like immortal verse
Shall triumph over time
With beauty to destroy his curse,
They marry like my rhyme.

That which you are, and built you are,
In stanzas beautiful,
This symmetry, these singing parts,
What can asunder pull ?

IMMORTAL EVE

Not death I know. Your smiling lips
Those perfect lines declare,
Beauty's immortal poet, you,
Makes what you mean and are.

The master couplet your fair eyes
Imperishably laugh,
And write upon my fearful heart
Oblivion's epitaph.

26

What the blood ruby in your lip,
Your teeth the pearl bereaves,
What in your shadowy fall of hair
Is leafier than leaves.

Your brow the lily's candour shames,
The rose from paradise
Thrives in your cheek's crimson sweet,
Makes flaming swords your eyes

For shining angels to defend
The inviolable dew,
The primal freshness, innocence
And holy bloom of you.

That power, what is it sovereign Eve
So selfs you to outshine
The world's perfection by just you,
That difference divine ?

27

In your large-moulded majesty
Rude grandeur, sovereign grace,
God's prime conception, dear, I see
The quarry of the race.

IMMORTAL EVE

Undwarfed and undemeaned, in you
Dim-hewn I see beyond
Lurks Helen, beautiful but true,
And frail fair Rosamond.

Miriam exultant, Judith stern,
And Jael, yet they refrain,
Tranc'd in your marble heroism,
Yet innocent of pain.

Of all unsoil'd, unsuffering strong
Are you the prelude chaste,
They but the dregs and lees of you,
You beaury's full foretaste.

28

Was she not graceful, formed so fair ?
Could I her shape exalt
Or God's hand save from faultlessness
Yet keep without a fault ?

Not tall, her stature seemed the rule
To inch perfection by.
Beauty, whate'er her attitude,
Stood with her just so high.

O sweet proportion ! How shall I
Describe her going's grace ?
Slow was it, stately, gliding ? Nay,
'Twas hers and beauty's pace.

So perfectly in her God blent
The mean that never cloy,
To hold my heart in balances
And keep admiring poise.



IMMORTAL EVE

29

From beauty's mould the statuary,
The Tuscan both and Greek,
Carved your divineness, you who marry
What's modern with the antique.

The play, life, rush—the you of you
The sculptor here caught warm ;
And mingled Donatello's strength,
And Della Robbia's charm.

And here as to give life restraint,
Breadth, large simplicity.
He served with Pheidian art austere,
Preserved your dignity.

The goddess, calm, majestic, sweet,
Who in your form and face,
Breathes universal womanhood,
The grandeur of the race.

30

No framework for your face I need,
Nor landscape painter I
To set you in some landscape sweet,
Mid water, wood and sky ;

Breath of the free wide out of doors
You carry, and we see
Wild heather bloom, around you hung
Rock, mountain, mystery.

Your footsteps conjure up the grass,
Your laughter brings the breeze,
Your freshness is a window flung
Out upon rough blue seas.



IMMORTAL EVE

You mood all landscape to yourself,
Nature must needs express
What you mean, open out from you
Her luring distances.

31

In close room, or in narrow street,
Where ever, love, you are
You breathe of landscape distances,
The boundless and the far.

Solemn and unapproachable
As mountain or as sky,
Of lonely sad horizon-rims,
You seem the heavèd sigh.

In your aloofness, hark, that wash
Of ocean waters wide,
Atlantic cliffs against whose loom,
It seems, the sea-gulls cried.

The ineffable from you suspires,
All Nature's melancholy.
Her isolation waste and wide,
Her wistful mystery.

32

'Tis not the faultless line in you,
The classic curve, the boast
Of nature's artful symmetry
That takes my fancy most.

Your eyebrows have the perfect arch
Yet they at times will sate,
Your dainty, well placed ear may seem
A thought too delicate.



IMMORTAL EVE

It is the lovely swerve, the fault
Entrances, always takes
Some features that from beauty's school
Runs out, a truant breaks.

Rife, smelling of your wayward earth
'Tis there you most are you
To savour just your racy self,
Delicious, homely, true.

33

The rose is fresh, the rose is fair
Yet fresher, face of dew,
Fresh as Aurora, fair as Dian
That morning charm of you I

The roses in Aurora's hair
Fade, and the dew is gone,
You lead with bloom unravished cheek
The noonday ardour on.

Around you is midforest cool,
The dim brooks sparkle and slide,
With springy tread upon the turf
You leap, the bay-hounds chide.

'Tis Dian and her nymphs I I hear
The far off halloli,
And O mid 'plashing waters cool
The virgin troop to see I

34

Youth or what magic sun preserves
The ever morning grace,
The virginal fresh opening bloom
And dew-dawn of your face ?

IMMORTAL EVE

Forever from the ocean foam
You like Aurora rise,
Your soft cheek mists to bloom. We catch
The day break of your eyes.

'Tis as the bubbling purity
Of brooks should fear no stream
But linger mid forget-me-nots,
Cascade and pool and dream.

'Tis love, the heart's youth, kindness warm
Keeps you inviolate
In ever happy maidenhood
To run and walk elate.

35

Like Hebe's in heaven's golden hall
Dwells your immortal youth,
You keep unwrinkled the great heaven,
You guard the wells of Truth.

Youth, golden youth, my dream you were
And I your Heracles
Step over fiery Ladon's coils,
Pierce the Hesperides.

For you I chop the Hydra's heads
And flay the lion's skin,
I drag up Cerberus from hell,
Your far off smile to win.

Towards you I press through labours hard
And sore distress, yet know
The fairer among feasting Gods
Your fadeless cheek shall glow.

IMMORTAL EVE

36

My rose, she blushes to be praised,
She wonders to be fair.
My lily of her pale pure bloom
Is shyly unaware.

At clear stars, water, woods, the flowers,
She looks with great wide eyes.
The world to her a marvel is,
And life a rich surprise.

Yet the prime marvel, what I find
In her to love, makes shine
Open in wistful wonder large
Her childlike eyes divine.

Is it mockery or flattery ?
Her dear look puzzled says ;
So utterly unconscious she
Of her own loveliness.

IMMORTAL EVE

V

1

Peace, clamorous trumpets ! Silence, drums !
Be breathless all and hush !
Let die applause. My lady comes,
My lady of the blush.

She's bashfuller than dew to hide,
Or dew-hung drooping rose.
Downbent she keeps her queenly head,
Her eyes down-lidded close.

Of sentient fibre to the quick
She trembles, shrinks from praise,
To look on her too earnestly
Sets all her cheek ablaze.

Cease, gazing eyes, to disconcert
Her holy modesty ;
And you, my songs, with shamefaced awe
Her pomp accompany.

2

Dear love be you my heroine
As I your poet am
Ever devoted, ever proud
Your sweet worth to proclaim.

Though I unworthy be to sing
And mar the lovely theme,
Yet with a pitying smile permit
These songs that brood and dream.

These broken songs are love's true sighs,
And passion, strong within,
Robs my weak tongue, oft makes me pause
And waver to begin.

IMMORTAL EVE

Pity me sweet and deign to listen
To your holy praise
With beauty's name my poor song christen
And to your own height raise.

3

For hints, for prophecies of you,
That flowered from age to age,
I roam each lovely legend old
Where beauty strews the page :

Evadne, Phyllis, Hero sad,
I think of them ; I burn
Dido's too perishable dust,
And Procris in her urn,

You come, the sweet fulfilment, you,
Of all they once foretold ;
Straight at your touch they burst their tombs,
The lovely dames of old.

As conjured by your spell they rise,—
Dead faces, glorious hair ;
And beauty, once more beautiful,
Remembers to be fair.

4

Long ere I dared the prize of you,
'Twas piracy, I swear,
Arctinus or great Homer's self
Dreamed of your beauty rare.

Already you were Sparta's queen
And I the Phrygian boy,
When to our future fame he fired
And sang the fall of Troy.

IMMORTAL EVE

He fabled surely. How should towers
Crash for a woman's face,
Or to a hair-brained headstrong lad
Kingdoms their ruin trace ?

With deep sad insight sure he sang,
Life sobs the echoed truth,
You beauty's dear illusion were
And I was flaming youth.

5

I smouldered in a dream obscure
Chafed at my unknown birth,
A prince disguised and debonair
I shone down rustic earth.

Listening to Ida's silver rills
My flocks I shepherded
That gay, light hearted Phrygian,
Young Paris, long since dead.

Happy if I had ne'er to do
With goddesses, to see,
By Hermes to the rash award
Led on, the glorious three.

'Twas destiny. Your starry eyes,
Dear, o'er the apple seen,
I risk'd the flaming towers of Troy
For Helen, beauty's queen.

6

Incomparable Helen, star
Blazing our doom we see,
Cassandra dreams, Qenone warns,
Infatuate Paris, we.



IMMORTAL EVE

On Ida's ridge the pines are felled,
The oak whose whispering boughs
Waved o'er our happy shepherd dreams,
Adventurous ocean ploughs.

Your eyes the loadstars were that lured
Across the perilous foam,
Ah what is Troy, what Hecuba
Could I achieve you home ?

Die Priam ! perish Ilion !
You are the child of Jove,
Beauty's last word you are : the world
Were well lost for your love.

7

No more of Ilium and the war
For Helen waged, sad strife !
Your beauty could not so destroy
But your true love gave life.

He who in one fair woman saw
The torch set Troy on fire,
Abstained not till all wifely worth
Breathed on his mighty lyre.

The blind old man of Smyrna saw ;
His flashing vision keen
Looked past the smoke of Troy and hailed
Your constancy serene.

Your sore tried excellence of heart,
Your steadfast heart, he knew
And chanted how the day-wrought web
You did by night unclue.



IMMORTAL EVE

8

How should I sing your wifely heart
 'Twas chanted once for all,
Ten years o'er ocean wandered for
 By him who planned Troy's fall.

O rare Penelope I Though I
 No wise Ulysses be
Yet for your wifely worth I sailed
 As wild an Odessey.

He that to your chaste heart would home
 Must leave Calypso's isle,
Must hear the siren pleasures sing
 Nor let the song beguile.

Man-eating Cyclops he must dare,
 The very Shades must view,
Consult the ghosts of prophets dead,
 Ere he win home to you.

9

It irked you even in fairy land,
 Your gloomy castle home,
Your fretted fancy leaned and sighed
 Across the perilous foam.

Around you maiden pleasures sweet
 Ladies in waiting stood
But still your dream-lit eyes would seek
 The wild and sombre wood.

Or if the mountain defile showed
 A snowy plume, a lance,
Your heart, that prisoner, beat high,
 That princess of romance.



IMMORTAL EVE

For me its fated fairy prince,
Your heart it throbbed and danced
And danger and expectancy
Kept all your thoughts entranced.

10

With the bright spur of your esteem
When first you knighted me,
A sword flash of my soul you made
Your man-at-arms to be.

You helmeted and plumed in pride
No recreant soul nor base,
The breastplate of your shining trust
Never shall I deface.

Dear eyes, my only sovereign,
Speak, bid me do my part,
For you I keep unblazoned yet
That virgin shield my heart.

What tilt, what tourney must I dare
For your sake, with your smile
To be encarned, what splintering shock
With all that's base and vile.

11

My youthful fancy served a squire
To feats and derring-do,
Now all my knighted courage kneels
Dear to be loved by you.

Upon a wild adventure hard,
Rash, hopeless now I start,
To win through your enchanting smile
To your close-guarded heart



IMMORTAL EVE

Past sleights of cold ensorcelments,
Past giantlike disdain,
Through forests drear I go to free
That lonely chatelaine :

Let but one secret look disguise
An errant demoiselle,
Lead, point me where pride, maiden shame,
Your lone heart citadel.

12

Of beauty and of battle sing
The epic old divine
That bleeds forever. Sing me, Muse,
The world's dear heroine.

There was and can be one alone,
She of whose face the joy,
The glory, kindled armaments,
And burnt the towers of Troy.

She is that western star who cost
Such toil, that Rome might be,
'Twas for her wedded worth I sailed
So wild an Odessy.

This, this is that Angelica,
Who as Orlando, mad
Made us with frowns, with her sweet smiles
Made as Medoro glad.

13

No lovely legend, no sweet tale
But has with you some link,
To hear of all enchanting names
Is of yourself to think.



IMMORTAL EVE

When Shakespeare his Miranda drew,
Perdita, Roselind,
They were but prophecies of you,
'Twas you he had in mind.

Iseult and Guinevere their parts
Played for you in advance ;
Your brows are with the woes inscribed
Of beautiful romance.

Your infinite and lovely worth,
The eternal feminine,
Holds sparkling like a diamond up :
In you all faces shine.

14

The glorious consummate worth
Of your perfection Eve ;
A thousand faces in one face
Shows Eden to deceive,

It flashes out on me, the sun
Of all that shall be fair,
Rebeka's eyebrows, Rachael's lip,
Bathsheba's tangling hair.

It augurs the sad heavenly cheek
Of Helen, 'tis star-crossed
With such Egyptian witchcraft sweet
As for a smile well lost

The world shall be. Such lovely peril
Has beauty's myriad mood
In you to sting tranquillity
And charm the solitude.



IMMORTAL EVE

15

Ah ! tell me not of heroines
And ladies long since dead ;
All their perfections, all their parts,
In you are summed and said.

To look upon you is to hear
The clash of battles old ;
And tournaments of gentle knights
And splintering lances cold.

For your sake, for the prize of you,
Do Troy towers flame again ;
And Hector and Achilles fight,
And for your sake are slain.

So perilous your beauty seems
With rumour of old wars,
With crash and conflict. But 'tis I
Who bleed and bear the scars.

16

Does lovely custom and sweet use
In Eden, the cold dew,
The consecration and the hush,
Fall upon me and you,

Grow irksome sweet ? Nay do but listen
Your beauty on my lyre
Shall wake in lovely sympathy
With legendary fire.

On Eden's tame sward dangerously
Shall you with Lancelot go,
Pelleas, Tristram, perfect knights,
And ache with shadowy woe.



IMMORTAL EVE

To Arthur's court by forest ways
Shall they, its ornaments,
Conduct you, through enchanted perils
And ringing tournaments.

17

What need we break monotony
Into the world to go,
Though our safe kisses trivial seem,
And Eden's blissful show

A pageant tedious grown, a tale
Ever retold, what need
The shadowy ages to reseek
Where strife and action bleed

When from your beauty's trumpet clang
In armour from your eyes,
'Tis as in panoply I sprang —
A courser of the skies

Mounted, from the sea-monster's jaws,
From death Andromeda
To rescue, or the fought for worth,
Of all Angelica ?

18

Though in your lovely worth I triumph
To sway in paradise,
Sole and secure, unrivalled for
The empire of your eyes.

I, beauty's sheer height feel, its crown
Of perilousness that kins
Terrible glorious things, with old
Vast homeless sorrow inns.

IMMORTAL EVE

I, anguish for you Antony,
Rage Lancelot for your sake
Die Tristram, Paris : armaments
I launch the towers to shake

Of Troy, or Camelot ; through old wars
I wrestle to achieve
The prize of you O innocent
Chaste smiling holy Eve.

19

The whole world in our heart-strings hums
To break forth O my Eve !
Under the willows look with me
And breathless charmed perceive

In those two glimmering images
Sad heroines, heroes tall,
Tristram and Lancelot, history, fate,
Cleopatra, Helen, all

Disastrous time withheld—all men
Shall dare or women do,
There perilously mirrored are
From us the only two.

In us, the race that erring swerves
Capacious of huge pain,
The loves of Camelot, woes of Troy
Yet linger and refrain.

20

Why should a pomp of heroines
Upon my harp strings go,
Affront your sweet majestic calm
With beauty's shadowy woe ?



IMMORTAL EVE

To see the serpent of old Nile
Tangle your tresses, Eve,
Upon your sad cheek Helen sit,
Juliet your bosom heave,

And Ysolde too and Heloise,
They come, and history storms,
Darkening my earth, clouding your heaven,
With fair unhappy forms.

Surges are they, sweet, of my sea
Are Ysolde and Gudrun,
And Guinevere—wild waves of me
Lifted to your calm moon.

21

I want not Helen's cheek of old
To make your cheek more fair,
I want not Berenice's gold
For glint to your dark hair.

Your face no other beauty needs,
No magic to beguile,
Than the soft glory of your look,
The sweet charm of your smile.

With nothing but your own meek blush,
With simple modesty,
You mantle to a nobler rose
Than Helen's self could be.

And for that wifely wealth of looks,
Your votive holy hair,
It streams across my spirit's sky
A constellation rare.



IMMORTAL EVE

22

Pride, honour, maidhood's lovely shame,
These were your armour dear,
These were the fortress of your strength,
Your helmet and your spear.

Sheathed as in shining mail you rode,
Your freedom none might wrong,
Towered high in lonely self content
You flouted, fled the throng.

Your lonely rose of beauty knew
A virgin pride serene,
In starlike glances sallied forth
To scorn what's common, mean.

You were your own sweet Britomart,
And honour's maiden knight,
Trompart and Bragodochio
To daunt and put to flight.

23

When your sole beauty, the world's charm,
Grows perilously fair ;
And shadowy tall heroes arm
To battle for your hair ;

When from your brow's triumphant worth
It seems the ages bled,
And through the leaves stern armour shone
Of glorious knights long dead ;

And swords flamed, spears to splinters crashed,
And the rich blood streamed bright
Of Arthur's peers or Charlemagne's
For you in thundering fight ;



IMMORTAL EVE

Enough then is one tranquil look
Out of your heavenly eyes,
To tell me we two are alone
And round us paradise.

24

Sole peace of Eden, though your cheek
The world's worth summarise,
Though passionate dead ages haunt
Those memories, your eyes ;

Oh, from that pageantry of dooms
Past or foreboded, where
You dwell with dim disastrous things,
With beauty and with fear ;

Though like a trumpet-blast your brow
Has power my soul to thrill
With famous battles long forgot
That bleed for beauty still ;

Lest Eden's lone peace perilous
With armies grow, refrain,
Lest from my sight you disappear
Into that pomp of pain.

25

And were they flesh, and were they real,
Those ladies of old time,
Your kinsfolk, or like you ideal,
Dream-stuff to kindle rhyme ?

Whence came you that your substance seems
Enchantment, some sweet thing
Made out of fancy, heart's desire,
For truth's apparelling.

IMMORTAL EVE

Yet substance tinglingly alive,
You laugh and sing and dance,
Like any woman, not as one
Paced out of old romance.

Substantial truth and poet's dream,
Both, both you are, so well
You know with bare reality
To weave a magic spell.

26

I wonder do you smile in heaven
When you my verse review
To see a poet's fancy run
Wild with the thought of you,

When I of your dear love would tell,
Your life, your virtues all,
From the bare simple truth I swerve
And back on fiction fall.

For shadowy hints of what you are
I ransack history,
Rob antique ages to set forth
Your bare reality.

Yet though through legends old I search
No tale is half so sweet,
Nor any story can the worth
Of your rich self repeat.



IMMORTAL EVE

VI

1

Muse of my worship, lean from heaven,
And touch my trembling lyre.
I cannot sing your heavenly worth
Unless you give the fire.

Nay, take the instrument from me,
And sweep the chords along.
Be, love, your own sweet poetess,
And be yourself the song.

You build the verses, thoughts and words,
It is from you they come :
Your beauties, virtues, sing themselves.
What need for me to sum ?

Be but your silent self, and you
Are poesy, the theme
And source exhaustless of all song.
You are your poet's dream.

2

I cannot from your beauties part
Your virtues O my sweet,
Perfection in my eyes you are,
Holy from head to feet.

The snowdrop of your spotlessness
On brow and cheek I find,
One with the noble inner bloom
And candour of your mind.

To blush a proud humillty
God framed your cheek a rose,
And every motion that you make
A queenly quiet shows.



IMMORTAL EVE

A hundred gracious qualities
Your beauty brings to view,
But your prime lovely worth through all
Is woven that you are you.

3

Do I disgrace you with compare
Who gem this gorgeous scheme,
Affront your peerless rarity
With parallel and dream ?

They are a setting, love ; the foil
To make your worth stand out,
I flaunt you in the face of things
That you the world may flout.

Not to adorn you do I string
This carcanet of praise,
You shine out Nature's ornament,
You deck our nights and days.

To set you off the central jewel,
Gems, roses, stars and moon
I challenge with your lovely self
To bear comparison.

4

The blind man in me opes the eye,
The deaf man joys to hear,
The cripple throws his crutch away
And leaps to touch you dear.

Where you come is beatitude
For heaven your step attends,
And every lovely attitude
My heart to worship bends.

IMMORTAL EVE

Your gentle sweet behaviour
To me's a holy book,
My spirit hails its saviour
In every shining look.

I know not why the sight of you
Imparadises day,
I know that the delight of you
Makes sorrow flee away.

5

No flourish needs your silent worth,
No trumpet blare of glory,
Yours be the hush of richer praise
Than loudest tongue can story.

I will not like the blatant crowd
With show and empty din,
With shouts and vain fanfaronade
Usher your glory in.

Mount, mount the chariot of my song
And you, dear conqueror, shall
Lead in captivity a throng
Of eyes processional.

Mute virtues for your trumpeteers,
Your sole pomp, lovely parts,
In verse shall you go triumphing,
And riding down all hearts.

6

In your lage womanhood to me
You are primaeval Eve,
I in your plain simplicity
Such grandeur do perceive.

IMMORTAL EVE

On a horizon blank you tower
As she in Eden did,
You are mankind's first lonely flower
Hedged with the fruit forbid.

Her frank and fearless innocence
You have, and to the full
Of impulses sudden and grand
I know you capable.

But the prime woman fresh from God
In this I recognise ;
You have the gift, dear, every place
To make a paradise.

7

Transparent as some lake, and calm
As mountain torrent's rest,
You keep the maidhood of the soul,
The childhood of the breast.

Around you in blue mystery
The eternal mountains lean,
Shoulder each other, rise to catch
The depths of your serene ;

And down to you the happy brooks,
A hundred laughters, come
To find in your pellucid depth
Peace, purity, a home,

Though fast the trembling torrents rush,
Play, babble, without cease,
They deepen but your limpid hush,
They add but to your peace.



IMMORTAL EVE

8

Woven through all that's exquisite
In you, the rare, the one,
The simple worth of womanhood
Astonishes the sun.

How much of all primaeval Eve
Could never yet atone
Smacks of the apple unredeemed,
Is beauty's every bone !

A sudden flash of jealousy
I lose you in the sex,
Moods, proud caprices, wayward break,
They dash me and perplex.

Ah, but that self suppressing power
Wholly for me to live,
To suffer and not seem to smart,
To bear and to forgive !

9

Softer than moonbeams, tenderer
Than dew, from head to feet
When God your soul and substance made,
Of flowers he made you, Sweet.

Though now in earth your ashes lie,
Though heaven your soul embower.
You self to fragrance and come back
Remembered in a flower.

No rose impassioned, lily cold,
But either still seems you,
It is some sombre mood of yours
The pansy darkens to,



IMMORTAL EVE

Some odour the moist violet,
Some hint the primrose pale,
Breathes of your modest lovely worth,
Each tells of you some tale.

10

The weakness of a woman's strength
You have. Love, you are frail
Only as hare-bells tremble soft,
As creepers catch and trail.

The lovely pliant strength is yours
To yield, yet win your ends ;
You have the weeping sympathy
With which the willow bends.

The witchery of freakish fault,
Caprice and waywardness,
Allies you to our human earth,
Endearing weaknesses.

The richness of the garden soil
You show. All noble seeds
Flower in your nature, nor disdain
Some wild and random weeds.

11

In your perfection secretly
I longed some fault to see ;
Some frailty, that this hopeless gulf
Might bridge 'twixt you and me.

I found the foible, thought I found ;
For when your eyes I praised,
They laughed with pleasure, yet a blush
Rebuked the joy I raised.



IMMORTAL EVE

In that rich crimson some small tinge
Of conscious pride might be.
I but a new perfection found,
Your lovely modesty.

The virgin glory of a blush
Made you more perfect flower.
Still must your rich humanity
Above me seem to tower.

12

Subtraction were detraction, dear,
Multiplication tires,
And to divide perfection's sum
Were tasking angel-lyres.

I would in moments, Time's poor slave,
Your millioned worth make shine ;
You lie beyond the shot of praise,
Or slander's counter-mine.

I do but vex arithmetic
With details of delight,
And shiver into fragments up
Your perfect chrysolite.

Vain torment of the pen, though sweet I
For after all is done,
Unknown, enchanting you remain,
Forever whole and one.

13

In parts I can appraise you, sweet,
The worth, the water rare
Of those soul-dazzling diamonds
That shine from out your hair.

IMMORTAL EVE

Richer than ruby comes the glow
Of your warm heart to me,
And fresh as split emerald
Your fadeless constancy.

'Tis with your rich variety
That opals change their fires,
'Tis to your sweet sobriety
The amethyst aspires.

The sapphire wonders on your arm,
But no gem is so true,
So precious as that single, sheer
And flawless jewel you.

14

Her heart appraise me jeweller,
Her heart that precious stone,
Rate me its water and its worth,
Its carat weight unknown.

Is it a diamond you see
Which through her eyes the shine
Rays of her soul's transparency
Its candour crystalline.

Or is it ruby from within
Incarnadines so rich
Her mouth to kisses and her cheek
With laughter to bewitch.

Is it a sapphire that so runs
In rich hints to impart
Blue through the clouding veil of flesh
The heaven that is her heart.



IMMORTAL EVE

15

Were there ever such golden things
As kingcups on the lea,
Or aught so freshly white and red
As daisies are too see ?

Your laughter and your gaiety
Are things more rich than gold,
Your face, your fresh simplicity
Than virgin silver cold.

Unpurchasable, like a flower,
All great things, landscape, sky,
You too have beauty's open face,
Enrich the seeing eye.

Where hearts are like the grass and dew
Unsought, selfgiven found,
You laugh out like the buttercup,
And daisies strew the ground,

16

What pearl of women gave her name
To you, sweet marguerite,
That you in silver proudly frame
A gold heart's worth complete ?

You love the hedge-rows ; grassy banks
Your large star decks serene,
By ditch and roadway you stand up
More stately than a queen.

Or speaks your whiteness of some saint
Whose passion to reveal
In golden glory still you shine,
Are martyred on a wheel.

IMMORTAL EVE

Whoever named you, my love's worth
To star forth, to express,
God crowned with silver and with gold
Your radiant simpleness.

17

Ah just on such a dainty stalk
Slender and straight she grew
Divine slight daisy, could you walk
Her going would be you.

Could she forever stand as mute
Condemned to one fair poise,
She in a nodding wind would sway
Of still, deep rooted joys.

Could sorrow but impearl, not mar
Her feature's sparkling grace,
Their freshness would be just the shine
Of your sweet morning face.

But storms her lovely attitude
Have spoilt. Her graceful head,
Her fresh bloom from the spectacle
Of beauteous things is fled.

18

Of all your virtues most I love
Your modest meekness, sweet,
The sovereign tall humility
That bows me to your feet.

When I have wished you queenly airs
To be what ladies seem,
You in your humble worth have towered
Above my tallest dream.



IMMORTAL EVE

When I have wished you graces, parts,
Display and dignity,
You smiled ; you knew the rarer art
Simply yourself to be.

Now over you, the violet,
I spread a hundred arms,
Conceal the more, your dewy-fresh
And fragrant worth so charms.

19

She was not tongue-tied. All she spoke
Could scarcely break the fence
Her tacit look and smile reserved
For lovelier eloquence.

'Twas in the sweet sound of her voice
She was articulate ;
Music it was to thrill the heart
And make each chord vibrate.

For infinite suggestions lay
Lurking in every tone
Whose baffling mystery the soul
Must echo, leap to own.

Echo to angel strings remote,
Leap to the sweetness there
Of all kind thoughts and feelings warm
Can render rich or rare.

20

Read in the light of you the world
No more a mystery
Cruel, inexplicable seems,
'Tis you, love, hold the key.

IMMORTAL EVE

When all the shames, injustices
I view beneath the cope,
Your kind heart balms for me earth's ail,
Your patience whispers hope.

No more shall childhood be oppressed,
The pity on your lip
Rebukes the tyrant's trampling pride
And shames the slaver's whip.

Enough that you can tranquil be,
Earth yet shall garner bliss,
All shall be happy. Your sweet smile
Sufficient earnest is.

21

If aught could sheen to sunshine add,
Pain torment's self beguile,
Witch from their wicked thoughts the bad
It is my lady's smile,

So sweet a laughter lurks therein,
So holy breaks the ray
Twixt heavenly eye and lovely lip
To glorify our day.

Could the first murderer have seen
Its sweetness, guilty Cain
Cleansed of his black crime he had been
And Abel lived again.

It seems to bandage every smart
And wash out every sin,
That world-assuaging sympathy
Her tender smile within.



IMMORTAL EVE

22

What power is in your gentle eyes,
Immortal, blissful Eve,
With the whole race to sympathise
And even in Eden grieve ?

Though, in your smile, Temptation, Fall,
In that world-saving ark
Caught up, the Deluge we survive
Earth's giant ages dark,

Blot out the past ; in your brow's arch,
Their rainbow peace, I see
Remembered the sad surge and flood
Of woeful history.

Though you revive lost bliss, your heart
Cradles august the pain,
The ancient primal woe of man,
And aches to mother Cain.

23

There are who say angels are not.
Forgive them ! Had they been
Once in your presence and looked well,
An angel they had seen.

You rend our mortal vesture's veil
With glimpses wild of heaven ;
Lighted on earth your very air
Sings with the pleiads seven,

How can you dwell with blot and ail,
Find glory in our shame,
In dust the heavenly wings let trail
Let smirch the halo's flame ?

IMMORTAL EVE

On our unhappy earth you seem
Lost on some alien star,
Yet love, that pitying look proclaims
The angel that you are.

24

To be the angel that you are,
Dearest, you need no wings,
Patience, love, pity round you play
And your whole aspect sings.

You need no heavenward lifted air
To seem angelical,
Your lovely actions kneel in prayer
And might redeem man's fall.

You raise us when we stumble, heal,
Comfort and warn. You spread
A golden aureole of praise
Around your gentle head.

You in God's presence are. We need
No quiring harps of gold,
To glimpse the glory. Heaven is where
You are. In you ensouled.

25

Infinite Pity made the heavens,
Infinite Love the earth.
Yet shattering tempests rage, and here
Injustice laughs for mirth.

I stuff my fingers in both ears
To hear those piteous cries.
I weep to see the groaning sphere
Drown in her miseries.

IMMORTAL EVE

The murderer of his brother's hope,
The sweeter and the slave,
The oppressor hideously enthroned
Make human life a grave.

There seems no pity in the heavens,
No love on earth, a hell
Full of all shames and wrongs. Meanwhile
You, you amongst us dwell.

26

And did eternal Pity then
Make all ? Ah ! sure it did ;
And out of the eternal Love
The heavens in glory shed.

I mind not now the mystery
Of cruel wrong and strife,
This ancient wail through history
This tangle deep as life.

I know there is a power that works
All things to harmonise.
I know it from the ruth that lurks
Deep in your gentle eyes.

Since first that pitying, loving look
Made heaven of my poor earth,
I know the suffering soul of things
Weeps to an angel birth.



IMMORTAL EVE

VII

1

At your unworshipped diety
I rage, I fill with shame.
Wildly I think to all the world
Your glory to proclaim.

To find salvation in your smile,
In your look paradise,
A zealot in that blissful faith
I would the world baptise ;

Spread my own joy. Therefore my songs
Like fiery prophets go,—
Make to her beauty proselytes
Mortality and woe.

Let blind men see those lovely looks,
The deaf her laughter hear,
Wash in her living charm the soul
Of either hemisphere.

2

She crammed with fragrant worth her five
And thirty years of life
A mother's sacred name she bore
And was a worshipped wife.

I, weeping would her eulogy
In these sad songs inscribe
And in her loss to weep with me
The unborn ages bribe.

Fain to her sumless excellence
Would I biographer
Play : but I stagger to commence,
Halt limping after her.



IMMORTAL EVE

Ah, love, your sacred silent worth,
Your virtues sweet to think,
How shall I blab, blurt out, profane,
Cheapen to common ink ?

3

I sing the phoenix of her kind,
The incomparable she !
What every woman, though she smile,
Must, listening, long to be.

One who to scandal leans no ear,
Can brook her neighbour's praise,
Remits no household care to hold
The giddy world in chase.

Homely her pleasures ; still at home
To all of tranquil heart,
She bears that others queen the show,
Lets fashion rule the mart.

Queen at the ingle-glow, content
So there she reign supreme,
Children's and husband's comforter,
Their idol and their dream.

4

Her eyes were not of amethyst,
Her teeth were not of pearl,
Human all over, laughing, crying,
Shrewd, simple,—just a girl !

Cheerful at the board's head she sat,
Meek in the firelight dreamed.
The shining angel she suppressed,
And only woman seemed.

IMMORTAL EVE

She took me off my guard with smiles ;
Her kindness lulled alarm ;
She blinded me with lovely looks
And tender simple charm :

But a wild glory lit her ways,
Her every act had wings.
Each smile, each look, each motion threw
Seraphic haloings.

5

A fragrance of rich homeliness
You breathe, so lovely rare,
Dulce domum the whole house cries
And "home, sweet home," the air.

The very doors unwillingly
Shut after you ; "She comes,"
Floor, rafter, the dear walls, each thing,
At your sweet entrance hums.

No flashy stranger in her house,
No gad-about they know.
The homely odour of your dress
Proclaims you as you go.

And "Our queen" now the parlour cries,
And ' Ours' the drawing-room ;
They know who brings the rich content,
Who banishes the gloom.

6

Such are your lovey household ways
O angel of the house,
Love's soul with domesticity
You marry, make espouse.



IMMORTAL EVE

That you a spirit glorified
For me should darn and knit,
Your loving zest and lovely zeal
Make seem the one thing fit.

To see you soap suds to the arm
Lowers you not, your high
Bright apparition gains the charm
Of use and dignity.

Your happy workday air proclaims,
The truth we wander from,
Love, service is an angel's heaven
And no heaven sweet as home.

7

No proud patrician dame is she,
No lady of old Rome,
Yet with as vestal dignity
She steps who queens my home.

Stoled is she in a modesty
As lovely-cold to pace,
And go with all a Roman's pride
And all a Roman's grace.

On no severe veiled sabine cheek
My fire-side embers play
To hail the house-hold goddess she
Who's called Emilia.

But the whole house with laughter fills,
Her smile is like a sun,
She is the hearth glow's Emily,
And Love's—there is but one.



IMMORTAL EVE

8

Lift to the light Emilia
Those noble Roman eyes
That seem in all the stately ways
Of Empire to be wise.

Ah I not the Roman's pageant-pomp
Of conquest to recall,
World trampling pride, those lovely eyes
Are they imperial.

The queenliness that crowns their gaze,
Triumphal shines, with charm
To war down every proud cold heart,
And with a smile disarm.

In firmness and in quietness
They nobly Roman are,
Those sovereign tranquilities
That hush my thoughts from jar.

9

Who was that fair Emilia
Who shone without compare,
And bore in ancient Rome your name
And like you charmed the air.

And did she with so firm a pace
Lifted the threshold cross,
And did she proudly take disgrace,
And triumph over loss.

And did she with a holy blush
Her husband's step acclaim,
And mask the beatings of her heart
And veil the vestal flame.



IMMORTAL VEE

Something like you I grant she might
That lovely Roman be,
Grave, noble, fearless, tender, bright,
But ah ! not Emily.

10

Not Emily. She never bore
In cruel shows a part,
No marble bosom holds in her
The heartless Roman heart.

Like a vague rumour dim, unreal
Comes to her gentle ear
The roar of old imperial Rome
As though it never were.

Could she whose pity treads aside
From worms, with hardening cheek
Behold the fallen gladiator
Unmoved her mercy seek,

Turn thumb down ? That pale captive pomp
Never could she have viewed
But the proud Roman in the race
Melting, their sad fate rued.

11

Her heart, that native diamond,
Out of her bosom's mine
Frankly she gave me, as it were
A toy, that gem divine !

Of purest water its rare worth
Lay, clouded, till I met
Love, the wise jeweller, to cut,
Polish for me and set.



IMMORTAL EVE

He took and rubbed with hard distress,
The diamond dust of pain,
Her heart's rough native worth, until
It shone and shone again.

Now in a thousand facets cut,
It sparkles out at me,
The brilliance of eternal love,
Eternal constancy.

12

When virtue and yourself I name,
It is a word too bleak,
Too gaunt and steely, life's rich play
Your living worth—to speak.

Your character I paint. But life
Sings in your words and deeds.
What I in rigid moulds would cast
Escapes : the statue bleeds.

Your qualities are sentient things,
Elusive and alive ;
Virtues, but still the lotus needs
Low nature's mud, to thrive.

When I have called you woman meek
Wise mother, perfect wife,
Your own sweet mystery still you are
And God's, his secret Life.

13

Let me not to hard diamond
Compare your virtue, dear,
Who softer than a moonbeam are,
More tender than a tear.



IMMORTAL EVE

He who would sum the life, the charm,
The magic, that is you,
Must catch the distance of the star,
The tremble of the dew.

To sunset's gorgeous langour he
Must add the morn's fresh ray,
And all the sparkling hush of night,
And all the blaze of day.

Such is your sheen, no diamond
Your heart, though true as steel,
No hardness has. A look, a word,
Would break it, ne'er to heal.

14

I must not call her mirthful ; sad
She was not. No extremes
Might shake her charmed sobriety
Or cloud-enchanting gleams.

For if thought saddened on her brow,
'Twas April in her blood ;
Archly her rippling mirth would break
The melancholy mood.

So perfectly from cloud to shine
Her temperate nature ran,
That sunshine might not know where shade,
Nor shade where sun began.

As some she was not coldly gay ;
Too near her heart to earth I
'Twas laughter rich with sympathy,
'Twas tear-drops dashed with mirth.



IMMORTAL EVE

15

When of your holy constancy,
Your faithful heart I tell,
I think of no hard lofty pose,
Alas, too frangible I

You were not coldly dutiful,
A rock mid dashing seas ;
You opened to the beautiful,
You swayed upon the breeze.

The sunshine of your joy you spilled
In smiles on everyone,
Your warm heart brimmed in friendships frank
And joyous as the sun,

But still, mid frolic, mirth, to me
A soft look stole, to say
Show where your heart was casketed
Deep from the gaudy day.

16

Soft, slowly soft, to my awed sight
And soul the vision grew.
No fault of mine, no frailty dashed
Her tranquil look. She knew I

Her steadfast sweetness mocked surprise,
So humbly she forgave.
A spirit she seemed, in majesty
Of meekness armed to save.

Once only with a grieving look
The goddess she betrayed,
Like Psyche when the lamp to her
Love's sleeping form displayed.

IMMORTAL EVE

I trembled both for joy and dread :
A glory from above,
A daughter of the Eternal, I
Had wedded, dared to love.

17

Be still our standard-bearer brave,
A beacon to the free !
Be still the rally to all fact,
All truth, all loyalty !

I ask not that a compelling bond
You keep, to me be true.
I am unworthy to unloose
The latchet of your shoe.

I am unworthy, love, to touch
Ground you have glorified.
Your estimation takes no blot ;
I urge not honour's pride.

But should you waver, you, who lead
The vanguard where drums beat,
How shall the host of hell come on,
Heaven's armies sound retreat !

18

Music you loved ; it was your life.
No new song, lovely air,
But you straight caught and hummed, as though
You in its secret were.

The mystery of melody
Was in your pulse of being :
Far heavenly chimings lit your eyes,
And song to you was seeing.



IMMORTAL EVE

Colour had music's life to you.
The very grasses sang,
To you the cosmic organ peal
In diapason rang.

God framed of harmony entire
That piece of music you,
To be to yourself lyrical
In all you say or do.

19

There is, there can be, none but you,
No woman in the world ;
For me the globe is blotted out
And history upfurled.

Where you come, faces fade away,
'Tis Eden's virgin sod ;
I stand mid whispering pine and oak,
I am alone wiith God.

You bind the bleeding ages up,
You wash all out of mind ;
As earth were to commence again
With battles yet undinned.

Ah ! what strange virtue, dear, have you
The warm old earth to flout ;
And make once more the morning stars
Sing and the angels shout ?

20

Alone in heaven walks the moon,
Alone the glorious sun
His heavenly life creative showers,
As you, sole Eve, are one.



IMMORTAL EVE

World consummating, self complete,
No other like you. Yet
On my heart's many stringèd lyre
To varying moods I set,

Break the white beam and excellence
Of you, all womanhood
Ray from your orbèd continent
Of wise and fair and good.

Already the sad famous pomp
Of those fair women grieve,
Rife in your beauty, you who key
Creation's music, Eve.

21

Dear, were you other than you are
By a hair's breadth, a swerve,
Were your cheek softly strange to me
By just the littlest curve ;

Were your voice other, not the trill,
The timbre sweet I know,
The way you have, to look, smile, speak,—
Only that way, just so,

That selfs you, lovely trick of you,
That darts such arrowy
Perfume, your individual rose,
To make us cry 'tis she I

Were that gone, all were gone for me ;
I should go wandering,
Blind, stumbling, seeking everywhere
The one thing, the one thing.



IMMORTAL EVE

22

I cannot wonder, O my sweet,
That you alone are you,
Could beauty else seem beautiful,
Or truth itself be true ?

Were you not, could majestic heaven
So tranquilly secure
Arch, or the everlasting hills
Or solid earth endure,

Or flowers be flowers ? Creation knows
That you are you, and none
In the least like you, fellow shall
Your peerless paragon.

And the high stars' recurring pomp,
Days, seasons, whisper me
Of that one certainty divine,
Assuring, she is she.

23

The something more by which your eyes
Shine fairer than the sun,
The just a little that is your rose—
And mystery's begun.

What the world's myriad-petalled flower
Misses by some delight,
I know not what, some charm that's yours,
Divinely yours by right ;

What in your tresses never yet
Breathed Helen, and outstrips
Just Cleopatra's witchcraft glance,
Just Rosamond's shy lips ;



IMMORTAL EVE

The something that is everything,
And you in one apart,
Like but with heavenly difference,
That is the sting, the dart.

24

Though in a thousand alien masks
You hide the face we knew,
Through all disguises still must peep
The something that is you.

Though you should act a hundred parts,
Something to know you by
Would linger through all veiling arts,
Break forth, your nature's cry.

You cannot your creation's coin
And mintage all disown,
The vesture your own nature has
Put like a habit on.

You cannot veil with artifice
Your sweet identity,
Something familiar, richly real,
Will give your role the lie.

25

No, no, you cannot other be,
Your gentle self forswear,
Belie that gracious countenance,
Deny your character.

False to yourself, why virtue, sweet,
Indignant would cry out,
And beauty to itself grow rare,
Truth hesitate and doubt I

IMMORTAL EVE

And time, the one sweet miracle
It flowered would seek in vain,
Contentment would her anchor lose,
And pleasure turn to pain.

The wide world wanting you would turn
To something else, poor, tame,
You not yourself, all changed, unreal,
Nothing would be the same.

26

That you are you, O sovereign truth !
It builds the world's content,
'Tis conscious in the smile of heaven
As the one thing God meant.

You are the salt that seasons all,
All lovely qualities
In tenure from your ladyhood
The name of virtue lease.

Since to be sagely sweet and good,
Since to be tender, true,
Since to have firm and quiet eyes
Is still to be like you.

To be yourself, no other, is
The primal excellence,
Let virtue, beauty, take from you,
Give back your redolence.

27

The fragrant individual flower
That which you are, dear, none
Save as your ape and flatterer
Can be beneath the sun.



IMMORTAL EVE

The rare distinguished masterpiece
That is achieved in you,
Nothing can rival, nothing quite
Replace or give anew.

You tower upon the waste wide world,
You stand a thing apart,
The perfume of your lonely self
Intoxicates my heart.

Before the rustle of your dress
Of you I am aware,
You cannot the street corner turn
My pulses are astir.

28

What is the changing quintessence
Of your rare lovely all,
The something more than all things else
Whose fragrance you I call !

What breaks this lily light of you
To shine through mortal flesh,
That fills me with delight of you
Forever and afresh ?

Your pure unutterable rose,
Not beauty that grows old,
Not virtue, goodness though you are,
The word seems tame and cold.

Is it some lovely trick to walk,
Sit, stand so, you have got,
Your way to smile so, to speak so,
It is I know not what.



IMMORTAL EVE

29

How can your mortal substance, sweet,
Have this mysterious might
That your rare self incomparable
The one should bring to sight

All others, image to my thought
All charm terrestrial, true,
Mirror sweet beauty's myriad shape
And be your own self too ?

O 'tis your individual worth,
That mystery, that flower,
Divinely selfed to be just you,
Your special rose to bower

Creation, with charm infinite
Core the great world and bring
Rifely to mind some sharp sweet hint
Of every lovely thing.

30

Secret of secrets, 'tis her name,
That word so shyly sweet,
I scarce dare whisper it, proclaim
To the unlovely street.

Not here where the rude common world
Goes by with curious eyes,
A hundred ears upon the stretch
My secret to surprise.

Out, out among the lonely woods ;
To flower, tree, grassy dell
The incommunicable sweet,
Arch secret will I tell.



IMMORTAL EVE

Nature's lone hush will sympathise
Although my cheek turn flame
To blab the holy mystery
Of her heart-treasured name.

31

What's in a name ? Why everything !
The rose you are complete,
Never by any other name
To me could smell so sweet.

Three random syllables ! Yet they,
Alone to me ring true,
Have the rare luck, felicity,
To breathe and whisper you.

No other sound could at the thought
Of you such rapture dart,
Or in your absence murmured o'er
Make music to my heart.

I wonder what prophetic lips
Could to your mark foreshoot,
And in one flowery sound the charm
Of all creation put.

32

Have those three magic sounds such power,
That falter forth your name,
To make dull silence musical
And my heart dance like flame ?

Who then are you ? Three common sounds
Kindled to song and fire,
Filled with the music of your name
The world becomes a lyre.



IMMORTAL EVE

Three short-lived syllables, but three,
Yet all is summed and said
The sweet notes of that Orphean charm
Might well awake the dead.

Earth's secret soul of all delight
The magic mystery
Christened in you. For oh, that word I
Those letters three and three.

33

Those three sweet endless syllables
That have the luck, for dearth
Of better her to name, are crammed
Melodious of her worth.

Pronounce them, mould upon the lips
Or taste upon the tongue,
O relish of slow endless sound,
The sweetest spoke or sung.

Musically, indefinitely
They seem to linger on ;
May now stop speaking. Yet my heart
Caskets each silver tone.

Though the brief sounds may die, they are
Perishable, their sense
In the wide ear of thought flows on
And teems significance.

34

God spoke in heaven it was one word,
The sweet word that with shame,
Joy, expectation, wonder filled
The world, my lady's name.

IMMORTAL EVE

From star to star the music rolled
Of those sweet syllables ;
And continents the breathing charm
And the blue ancient hills.

Heard. Famous kingdoms, cities old,
Locality, time, fate
Waited and wondered for that word's
Dear worth to incarnate.

And shivering the prophetic earth
Of her nativity
The place, hour, moment heard abashed,
Enraptured, whispering 'she'.

35

Ask not her name. Adorable
To me, 'tis but a word,
The sound that makes my heart run wild
You may before have heard.

There's many a sacred name and sweet
But her who is my saint
Natalia, Agnes, Margaret,
No holiest name can paint.

To speak her fragrance there's no flower,
Rose, violet, lily,
One garden glory of them all
Her namesake fit to be.

Syllables cannot stand for her
Nor words her worth express,
To her soul-cramming sweet idea
All sounds are echoless.

IMMORTAL EVE

36

Mimnermus, Smyrna's tender bard,
The sweet lonion, sang
Of Nanno. To his mournful lyre
He chanted love's rich pang,—

Our short-lived youth, old age that comes
So soon, so swift youth's bliss,
All that in our strange, human lot
Familiar sorrow is.

And Nanno, Nanno, on the chords
Sobb'd, ever went and came
Nanno, the lovely flute-player,
Who touched his soul to flame.

Dead and divine, her name he gave
His tender elegies,
As I to these the name whose sound
Is love's and ecstasy's.



IMMORTAL EVE

VIII

1

Think me no vulgar amorist
Because of love I chant,
I glory of no shallow flame
To be the hierophant.

If God of me a poet made
It was of love to sing,
Love by which Undine soul became
And angels fledge the wing.

Love the mysterious primal force
Whose motions all things spun,
Elder than Chaos. He but masks
As Cytherea's son.

The Aphrodite whom I sing
Shall be Uranian,
Pure as the virginal sea foam,
High as the hopes of man.

2

Ah, what is love ? 'Tis Beauty's ghost
For which I play the man,
Fight for that fair phantasmal shade
From Priam's barbican.

And what is love again ? Two hearts
Vowed, troth-plight each to each
Whom death shall marry at the last
And lifelong error teach.

How long, but for the shade of you,
Your beauty's idol, dear,
I fought, and deemed that phantom form
Jove's daughter without peer.



IMMORTAL EVE

Far from the battle you, your soul
 Within her mountain cave
On Ida waited patiently,
 Oenone sweet and grave.

3

Whoever loved, the poet cries,
 Who loved not at first sight !
How is it that to me you seemed
 Never till now so bright ?

As at the first look still to me
 You are a new surprise,
A revelation still you dawn,
 A wonder in my eyes.

With each look that I take of you
 I fall in love afresh,
And gazing but the more am caught
 In beauty's dazzling mesh.

That custom stale you not, nor time
 Wither, you need no art,
The fountain of exhaustless charm
 You have, a loving heart !

4

Two hearts that for each other bled,
 The story pitiful
Weeps in these pages : how love's saint
 Once pitied passion's fool.

She left the blissful choir above,
 From God's face turned away,
She forfeited a place in heaven
 To weep with suffering clay.



IMMORTAL EVE

She loved me with a love so deep,
So perfect, so entire,
That half of it was heavenly ruth
And half but earthly fire.

Across a fatal chasm we loved
'Twas vain, we could not meet,
She out of angel distance burned,
I trembled at her feet.

5

Though all the vast sky pillaring,
Majestic, Atlas towers,
Although his shoulders rest in cloud
His feet are in the flowers

Where his heart is. He cannot bend
Stooped and with aching knee
Relax the whole world's load severe
To soft-seen flowery ease.

So with bowed head and weary hands
I pillar up the weight
Of some too vast, exorbitant
Incalculable fate.

I gaze down and with all heaven's load
Upon me think how sweet
To rest where you are O my flower
With all flowers at my feet.

6

Must I this recreant palinode
Sing in this face of day
That you the goddess I acclaim
Are but a queen of clay.

IMMORTAL EVE

Be then no goddess. Yet shall I
Adore you, and you queen
Earth, my terrestrial paradise ;
Be goddess of the scene.

Or serpent-tempted eat the fruit,
Be woman to the core,
Err with a sudden impulse rash
Yet shall I you adore,

Grieve, fall with you. By flaming swords
Be driven forth, still bliss,
Curs'd, fallen to dig, toil for you,
Be where my goddess is.

7

No goddess, no but very woman,
Amongst the thorns I bleed,
I want you palpitating human
To fill my human need.

Marmoreal distance pleased me once
Your beauty's idol pose,
To day be common earthly sweet
Yourself my breathing rose.

You who so throb humanity,
Whose tender feeling heart
Claims in immortal suffering share,
In dust and death a part.

This gulf betwixt me and the grave,
'Twixt Nature immobile,
Stern, silent and unfeeling gods
Only yourself can feel.



IMMORTAL EVE

8

When you waved beauty's witching wand
I quaked not, I felt no fear,
I knew my sweet enchantress was
No deadly dark Medea.

Yet those eyes through their night of hair
Might once more heroes fire,
They have such black imperious art
Such glorious witchery.

Your brow a whiter magic knows,
Your cheek a sweeter wile,
Than Colchian drugs or charms for me
Earth's dragon to beguile ;

Win me the gold fleece, sorceress,
Over life's foaming blue
Waft me your loving Argonaut
And oft my youth renew.

9

Those ruby rich mysterious things
Call'd kisses what are they ?
So soft, so sweet, so warm, so fleet
They come but will not stay.

So soft— they seem intangible
Those spirit-touches light,
Shy redbreasts lit on snow to peck
At crumbs of our delight,

Droppings infrangible made
Hot from the soul to seal
With mutual imprint of true lips
What love can only feel.

IMMORTAL EVE

So rich the ruby wealth of love,
So sweet, so fleet, alas,
They seem well nigh to take again
Even before they pass.

10

You are no brief thing called a flower,
Voluptuous, lovely rose,
You are what passion blushes, joy
To youth and fancy glows.

All lovely feelings rich, intense
Your white and red proclaim,
Terror, desire and ecstasy,
Sweet madness, holy shame.

Your petals were foam-chequered sprays
Flung from the crimsoned sea
When Venus, when my lady rose
Anno Domini !

The fluttering cupids caught and tinged
Those virgin foam-flakes red
To make of you love's flower, when first
My heart with beauty bled.

11

Her fair eyes were your destiny
To lure your sail from shore
Far from the cheerful, humming haven
Vast ocean to explore.

The lonely deeps of love and fate
Whose waters are the soul,
The mystic tidal surge we hear
Whisper from pole to pole :



IMMORTAL EVE

You heard the luring call, you fired,
You felt the distance woo,
Her infinite enchantment becked
Who was the all of you,

Yourself yet other. She from far,
Imperious, becked your fate ;
You on the wild sea of yourself
Launched reckless and elate.

12

Ah desperate voyage ! Her to reach
That world remote and lone
Whose polestar guides you on the swell
Of stormy seas unknown.

On all sides heaves that homeless waste,
Yourself without a bound,
Yet charted with the dream of her
That stormy sea you sound.

A wild ideal sketched you have
Of her, though billows rock,
Your hearts unwavering compass points
To her, though tempests shock.

Ah, dream-hired voyager ! From self
To her you would sail home,
Ever on alien shores you touch,
On alien waters roam.

13

If your mouth were a crimson flower,
My soul a honey bee,
Would I not loiter hour by hour
Make honey greedily ?

IMMORTAL EVE

Would I not in the closure sweet
Of that rich blossom suck,
Hoard, hive the treasure, snow, hail, sleet
Nor winter cold should pluck ?

But my heart is the crimson sailing
And you a butterfly
Come quivering on disdainful wings,
You sip and hover by.

A taste, a touch, the lonely flower
It trembled swayed for bliss,
And since to sighing odour breathes
Of that unsated kiss.

14

The queen bee in my breast you are,
And all the other bees
My wingèd wandering thoughts but swarm
To serve you and to please.

What selfless passion and delight
The virgin people fill,
Songs, golden honey, your rich praise
To gather and distill

From all fair objects, every flower
The world has, they extract
The luscious sweets of lovely song
Which in my verse are packed.

What moves them ? Toiling chastity ?
That awful instinct seen
For no reward, in purest love
To labour for their queen.



IMMORTAL EVE

15

Blown on a dainty scallop shell
 Into my heart you streamed
By Zephyrs wafted and sweet airs
 As Botticelli dreamed.

What sweet airs played while ocean laughed,
 To robe you every Grace
Stood waiting, wherefore came you Love
 With such a wistful face ?

What ailed you while the blown showered locks
 Fell round you, while for folly
Waves danced, and shook for glee the flowers,
 To seem so melancholy,

So sad, floating to my heart's shore
 So grave was it to measure
The foreknown bitter strength of love,
 The tristful sweet of pleasure ?

16

He dreamed and dreamed, till marble lived.
 Pygmalion ; I, to fire
The pure white soul I wedded, had
 A harder task and higher.

The virgin marble of my hope
 With sighs, impassioned thought
I shaped, till she smiled down on me
 To my heart's idol wrought.

Alas, 'twas beauty's self I carved
 And prayed to be my own ;
A goddess from immortal dreams
 How could I make step down ?



IMMORTAL EVE

She in my adoration towers,
She smiles, she shuns control.
O happy sculptor I he but wrought
In marble, I in soul.

17

What could she have I would not give ?
Mine were it, I had given
All earth to her, and to the green
Added the blue of heaven.

She knew it. Was it some poor gaud,
Robe, trinket, jewellery,
The paltry present pleased her so
The tear was in her eye.

She knew the boundless ache of love
In that poor trifle hid,
More grieved for what it could not give
Than glad for what it did.

Yet still that soaring look of hers
Beneath the lifted lash
Fain for the something more than all
Must needs my soul abash,

18

Too well ! To madness shall I say,
Not wisely ? As the Moor
Who threw his priceleoss pearl away
And knew himself how poor.

Or all or nothing ! 'Twas our creed.
His crime was love's excess,
His great heart's erring over-reach :
And ours it was no less.

IMMORTAL EVE

Mad for the something more, we loved,
Life's tranquil joy we killed,
We would not cheapen with enough
Love's all, so all we spilled.

Desperate adventurers for a wealth
Wild, starry in our eyes.
Wisdom ! And was it ever given
To love and to be wise ?

19

A God, a God, her lover was,
Too bright for flesh to bear,
Immortal Eros, what though she
King's daughter were and fair.

Infinite darkness, mystery,
Stars, midnight's tingling hush,
These must disguise divinity,
Temper the bright down-rush.

He would have schooled her simpleness
Toward godhead vast to yearn,
She rashly sought the all of him
And with a look would earn.

Now from the blinding vision,—she
Has seen immortal love,
From beauty's fairy pleasure-house
Forlorn must Psyche rove.

20

To know, by its own blaze to see
Fire burns up ; to unroll
Wide earth the day-god's car. 'Tis so
With Psyche, with the soul



IMMORTAL EVE

As spark of some celestial fire
She burns, nor thinks it sin,
She feels to her immortal wooer
Something in her akin.

Out of his starry infinite
The dusk of him she burns
To know : she lights the fatal lamp ;
Rashly his anger earns.

Even so I trembled to light up
The midnight of her eyes
For in one shining look I found
Love, love that moves the skies.

21

The fairy palace of her face
That Cupid gave to me,
The gardens of her cheek and brow,
They palled, they were not she.

That charmed and whispering pleasure-house
But chafed me with desire
To know the mystic hands that served,
To see the magic choir.

Behind her beauty's darkling hint
And miracle was he,
The dim disdainful splendour, I
Must love but may not see.

Only in midnight hush he came,
In beauty's dark. Unkind I
He would not have me know my bliss,
He sought to keep me blind.



IMMORTAL EVE

22

Love, heavenly Love, in your fair eyes
Fashioned the primal dew,
Ensouled me in pure paradise
To dwell with only you.

Love, the world's maker, Love divine,
Creative, hedged from sight
And hushed with whispering wilderness
Far tumult, loud affright,

There where hate is, battle and fear,
The fruit of knowledge bad,
Which should I taste with hungering ear,—
Toward shadowy history sad

Turn from you, dear,—like flaming swords,
The angels of your eyes
Would drive me forth from joy and you
And dewy paradise.

23

Since first one heavenly ray revealed
The Love-god in her eye
My humbled soul like Psyche roams
To find divinity.

Love is no kind, no friendly power,
He is an angry god
Who made the palace of her brow
His dainty proud abode.

What pleasure gardens then I had
For my disport, what shade,
What baths and fountains, aviaries
Her speech and laughter made.



IMMORTAL EVE

Love in the midnight hush of her
Visited me. His kiss
I had. What ailed me to mistrust
My simple secret bliss.

24

Can I the cloud out-topping joy,
What I felt hope to pen
When your divine eyes singled me
First from the throng of men.

Such joy Coreggio has dreamed
Where lo swoons for bliss
Upon the misty mountain-crag
At Jupiter's cloud-kiss.

'Twas thus affrighted Ganymede
Felt lifted from the ground
Lost in the vast o'er shadowing wings
And heard his chiding hound.

So lonely Danaë in her tower
Cast up her eyes and felt
Love in a rain of golden ruth
The heavens in pity melt.

25

She loved me ! Like a dream it is,
A vision. She to me
Compsed of frailties, cracked wth faults
Gave her idolatry.

A beggar in his rags she found
And thought some dazzling prince,
Two humble page-boys in her eyes
Squire and attend me since.

IMMORTAL EVE

Robed in her admiration rich
And with her praise pranked out
I shiver in my inward rags
My outward glory doubt.

Her gorgeous fondness made of me
An emperor. Alas !
Not gold but clay her idol proved
Not diamond, brittle glass.

26

Above all other loves I place
The husband's and the wife's.
The kiss that was in Eden kissed
Is both love's base and life's.

Without the heart-beat's two-fold rhythm
Life cannot be, nor show
In action perfect : feet and hands,
Eyes, lips, are only two.

Marriage : it is the world's sane curb
The very school of trust,
The nurse of sanctity. It builds
Joy out of daily dust.

How else could heaven on ocean print
One soft perpetual kiss ?
Or earth in tender green toward heaven
Bosom to merge her bliss ?

27

God placed the awful rondure vast
Of this great marriage-ring
The world, with consecrating earth,
Sky, ocean, everything,



IMMORTAL EVE

To bind our two hearts chastely wed
With mutual exchange
Of the year's gold circumference,
Jewelled with beauty strange ;

Stars, diamonds of the distance, night's
Black opal, ruby new
Of sunrise, and leaves emerald-fresh,
And the clear pearling dew,

He with betrothing grandeur girt
Our hearts, and gorgeously
Made nature's sacrament of charm
Our wedding-ring to be.

28

Her smile, that well of secret charm,
Where lay its sweetness then ?
Let me rememeber through my tears
And check my faltering pen.

Was it her laughter's dreaming hush ?
Was it her eye's caress ?
Or her full soul that surging seemed
Upon her mouth to press ?

It was heart-joy, and tender love
Seeking my own to gain
That surged and ventured on her lip
So timorously fain.

That meek, shy eddy of delight
So wistfully besought
The happiness it gave, my heart
Into my mouth it brought.



IMMORTAL EVE

29

Her passion was a silver thing,
Like the chaste moon above
When down through shivering Latmian pines
She stooped a man to love.

In silver trances of the night
She to Endymion came,
Nor save in slumber on his lip
Printed that kiss of flame.

He in a silver dream of her
Slept lone in Latmian shade,
Nor chastest moonbeam saw when she
Her shuddering visit made.

Forever in a dream he loves,
Endymion. She is dead
Who silvered my lone sleep ; I wake
And find the vision fled.

30

How words are beggars ! Human speech
How poorly, it expressed
The riches mutely on her lips
In tongue-tied charm suppressed.

Sometimes in maiden-wise her love
Rose to a misted cheek
The soul of perfect wifeliness
Blush'd what it could not speak.

Sometimes her tender bosom heaved
Tidal to reach my pain,
But the heart-swell of pity surged,
Whitened, and broke in vain.

311

IMMORTAL EVE

Sometimes through tears a streaming way
Our hearts sought each to each ;
But the full word articulate
Easeful, we could not reach.



IMMORTAL EVE

IX

1

Like Ariadne sad, forlorn
Our one soul, mine and yours,
Boyhood, virginity, stood blank
Lone upon Naxian shores.

Over wild seas like Theseus fled
Crude fancy's false ideal,
Passionately we wept nor guessed
How near youth's burning real

And Love's approached. The cymbal's clash
We heard not, nor the bound
Of Satyrs, nor Silenus laugh
Drunk, mirthful, ivy-crowned.

But towards us high the fiery God
Leaned on his car, flushed youth
And Love to crown us with his crown —
Eternal starry truth.

2

Far off from Ganges' spacious tide
And plains where dreams the palm,
Your skyward leaning sister, I
Was reared remote from calm.

When first your sunny face I saw
From England's colder shores,
From pelting rain and wintry storm
My spirit rushed to yours.

You too in me some murmur heard
Of London's mighty sea,
Like magnet toward iron you yearned
With strange affinity.



IMMORTAL EVE

With warmth and sweetness of the south
You thawed me through and through,
I out of northern grayness bleak,
The dearer, came to you.

3

The strong word, some rude, bitter truth
What then, would that have rent
The veil asunder ? Ah, who knows ?
Such word God never sent.

For if too deeply in her eyes
I look'd, my fate to know
And wring its Delphic utterance
She shrank as from a blow.

I could not blame her when her gaze
Fearful, imploring grew,
Love's awful silence unprofaned,
I stammered and withdrew.

What ailed them, some-one says, these two
Their love they could not tell
Wedded ? Together, and did they
Love then ? Alas, too well !

4

Our nurture different, could that
The speechless barrier be
To sunder our two hearts, although
It freshened mystery ?

Seemed I an alien, dear, to you
Because my accent broke
On our sweet Indian tongue, and I
Better the English spoke.



IMMORTAL EVE

And with speech, manners, thoughts—were they
Mountains to hold apart !
Ah destiny more shrewdly plans
When she joins heart to heart.

These are but discords, well she knows
Whose difference discreet
With rudeness breaks monotony
And makes the music sweet.

5

Come, let me count the differences
Love, betwixt you and me.
Your day, my night ; your sweet, my sour ;
Harshness and melody.

I slow, you quick ; I coarsely strong
And you as finely frail,
In you divine, meek womanhood,
In me the selfish male.

You loadstone tender, I loth iron ;
My depth, your starry height.
Ah, who might think such differences
So hopeless, to unite.

Love who the world's foundations laid
And stretched the heavens on high,
He knows to join with contraries
And marry earth and sky.

6

Her pure ethereal feminine
I love, but with it strive,
She with my grosser earth ; we keep
Love tingling and alive.

IMMORTAL EVE

When she would have me kneel in prayer,
Would me God's servant have,
I, like a very pagan, swear
To live and die her slave.

She points me still the path to heaven,
But pull her down to earth,
Plain homely earth, its loyalties
And loves and songs and mirth.

My gentle Puritan she is
And I her Cavalier,
We pull contrary ; 'tis the tug
Makes each to either dear.

7

Those others in the scene with us,
They, it, and he and she,
They pleased, they puzzled, they amused
Till you, love, dawned on me.

Quaint figures in a passing show
Half serious, hardly true,
A casual interest they awoke
Till I, love, looked on you.

You, you, that sweet amazing you,
Tinged with your mystery,
Caught in your glow, no distant they
The world has warmed to "We".

Live, throbbing and allied to you
It holds nor best nor worst
Since you, that second person sweet
For me became the first.



IMMORTAL EVE

8

Oenone, yes, that love-pined form,
Those tangled locks 'twas you,
Chaste nymph, for all my perfidy
And matchless treason true I

Deserted, you were faithfull still,
You knew the herb that balms
You waited for some wrankling wound
To lead me to your arms.

From phantoms you would wean my soul
But I was Helen-mad,
I would not turn again to you,
My grave sweet Oread.

It was my dead self's funeral-flare
That brought me to you, sweet,
You leaped into the flames, and made
Our shroud a wedding sheet.

9

The needs of life, toil, hunger, sleep
Cry their imperious must,
Impotence, frailty, anguish, death
Tell me I am but dust.

Imprisoned in dark flesh I sigh
Lonely and self exiled,
I wait and work this dull machine
Only till you have smiled.

From your lips then so sweet a ray
Strikes through the mortal prison,
Love like a skylark to the day
Out of dull fact is risen.



IMMORTAL EVE

No more I feel the irk, the cloy,
The bondage, the eclipse,
I soar and catch eternity
From those triumphant lips.

10

When, Aphrodite, you love's queen
Born from my spirit's sea
Rose up through passion's crimson pain
The world you gave to me.

Time then commenced. To Cronos' scythe
My heart in blood-drops ran,
When Beauty, from my bleeding thoughts
You rose Uranian.

The foam born. All my ocean wave
In heart-swell to you pressed,
A thousand hovering joys and loves
Clung to you and caressed.

With you life rose. Trees, the sweet birds,
Flowers, all things then emerged
When, Beauty, you my heart's ideal
In naked glory surged.

11

Never the sky before was blue,
Never the earth was green
Until that glorious sun, your eye
Lit up the painted scene.

Then first for me the mountain tops
A sovereign splendour caught,
Then first the grey east flushed with hope
And darkness first was not.



IMMORTAL EVE

And ocean rolled up to my feet.
Bluer than blue its waves,
In crested foam more silvery fresh
And snowed enchanted caves.

Then first this limpid spread of air
In distance infinite
Coerulean broke, when first your eye
The world for me did light.

12

I cannot leave the sanctuary
Where all sweet shelter lies,
I will not quit the altar house
Of your beloved eyes.

Without the hungry ocean roars,
The waves that shipwrecked me
With clutching fingers toss and foam
To drag me out to sea.

Life and the worlds, the stains of being,
Each hungry consequence,
Relentless faces grimly wait
Without, to drag me hence.

But I have reached a fortalice
Where vainly waters beat,
And I have found in her fair eyes
Forgiveness, shrift complete.

13

In all the world there's nothing, dear,
But only you and I,
We sing and tally, rhyme for rhyme,
For question its reply.



IMMORTAL EVE

You cannot think of aught but me
Or in or out of sight,
In all this lovely, pomp of things
'Tis you are my delight.

You mirror in my streaming thoughts
Your heaven's enchanting blue,
And I, the apple of your eye,
See but myself in you.

O love, my music, heart with heart
Still let us beat in time,
It is such perfect time as ours
Makes up the spheral chime.

14

Nothing can disentangle us.
Bound in your charm of charms
When I seek, love, to free myself,
I run into your arms.

We quarrel only to be flung
Back on each other's breast,
Honey to make of words that stung
And kiss with dearer zest.

To sunder on our seperate tasks
A world of absence seems,
We fill eternal minutes up
With wishes and with dreams.

So close the linking threads combine
I cannot think a thing
Your soul's divining sympathy
Will catch it on the wing.



IMMORTAL EVE

15

The mind is its own place, can make
Heaven of itself or hell,
My mind's a heaven, since you are pleased,
Approving, there to dwell.

Yet to that soft empyreal air
The fires of hell burn up,
Even in the bliss of paradise
I taste perdition's cup.

Your love was my salvation, sweet,
Your smile. But should you frown
Sheer o'er the crystal battlements
That wild thought hurls me down.

Should I be starved your heavenly look
With angel comforts crammed,
My heaven turns hell ; I suffer then
The torments of the damned.

16

O love you are a little thing,
The world's so huge to see,
One in this millioned scene, a drop
Lost in immensity

You glitter o'er me. Yet aloft
Those countless glories are,
I fear to lose in spangled heaven
My one small shining star.

I dread to sever from your side,
Suffer you from me, sweet,
Lest you, once gone, the city vast
Swallow, the roaring street.



IMMORTAL EVE

And when I think of time, change, death
Life's million'd accidents
Ready to snatch you, I, as lost,
Weep you with pain intense.

17

For me you wore this mask of time,
For me you came from heaven
With laughter of your sweet sixteen
To bathe my twenty-seven.

You were the taller spirit, dear,
Yet walked through humbler doors
That you might look up in my face
And draw it down to yours.

To kiss away my sadnesses
You masked in younger years
With laughter and delicious joy
To sun away my tears.

As older, wiser, that you might
Reverence, honour me,
An angel's humbleness you wore,
A child's simplicity.

18

I swear it is a hateful thing
To play the hypocrite I
Are they then, love, whom you bepraise
Church goes, or am I right ?

Saturday night and Sunday too,
I in love's tavern sit,
Yet am I, by their leave, as they:
Religious every whit.



IMMORTAL EVE

To be with you is holy church,
As sweet an anthem rolls
Here where your beauties sing God's praise
As where they save their souls.

Your beauty mends life. And if joy
My frank religion be,
I pledging, love, your heavenly eyes
Am the right devotee.

19

I can but guess, I cannot reach
The utmost you of you,
Your all of fair and good and rare
Which is the true of you.

To see you enter is to feel
The world is not the same
But something strange and something sweet
Has kindled since you came.

Your last that's highest, your far that's nighest
'Tis not this all of you,
Your beauty's vesture, smile, motion, gesture
'Tis not the tall of you.

'Tis nameless 'tis invisible,
A charm, a sympathy,
A joy, a presence felt like fire
That plays from you to me.

20

Whether the sun, dear, shine on you
Or you shine on the sun
I hang in doubt : unless it be
That you and he are one.

IMMORTAL EVE

When from your pillow you awake
I know the sun is up,
The whole room with your morning face
Brims over like a cup.

When you are absent he in cloud
Pent in a sulk will lour,
And when you come again, he shines,
Breaks forth in joyous power.

He lights you with admiring eye
While you his gold enhance,
He scatters sun-shine, but 'twas loaned
From your sweet countenance.

21

And I, what riches, hourly wealth
Had I to treasure up
Poured out at random without stint,
It overbrimmed the cup.

Her smile, her look, her voice I had
Present her beauty's view,
Absent her tender-heartedness
Unseen, more constant, true

Nearer and dearer felt. Have I
Not told her virtue o'er ?
Why should I still expectant stand
As on some ocean shore ?

For what far pearl her bosom plumb
Heaving with love for me ?
'Twas that last mystery, dear—thyself;
Alas I had not thee !



IMMORTAL EVE

22

The slavish dotage of mine eyes
So balks me of your heart
That oft to think and dream of you
I needs must go apart ;

I needs must sunder. Not to dull
The eye with too much view
I dine with memory and thought
Upon the sweeter you.

What though the eye be privileged,
(Is he not beauty's priest ?)
The soul, too, hath her appetite,
Is hungry for the feast

Immortal. Not your lips and eyes
For sustenance she needs,
'Tis on the nectarous thought of you
With fancy that she feeds.

23

What ailed us that earth's common sweet
To hand, for some far thing
We voyaged in each other's eyes
And vexed our souls to bring.

Like veriest lovesick girl and boy
We still would stand and sigh
Abashed and wistful, some far heaven
Craving, the whole earth by.

Wherefore could we not be content,
The simple sweetness spurn ?
Why for some strange suspected bliss
Unreached at dream and burn ?



IMMORTAL EVE

Nay, ask the breaker why it foams
Ever on sand and stone,
Ask of the wild wind what it seeks
Round every corner lone.

24

Oft cheaply in the jest, the mock
Our full hearts swerved aside
The unfathomable deep, secret wave
Swelling within to hide.

It was no soft emotion, sad
Yet pleasing : cruel it was
Mastering all efforts to suppress
The wave that broke the glass,

Ruffled the smoothly polished face
Of shallow every day,
So wildly sweet and strange it surged
Nor she nor I might stay.

She in a housewife's cares sought ease
And I in poetry,
The cold high Muse ; nor when we met
Each other dared to see.

25

Still from each other carefully
Husband and wife we mask
Love's baffled inner loveliness
In trivial game and task.

Wild glimpses of each other's souls
We blench. The stormy glare
Of truth we shrink from, shun, affect
A cheerful worldly air.



IMMORTAL EVE

To be thought what the world admires
For men's exterior view
We play at showing staid content,
Love, not too much, but true.

The shallows ! But the soul's great deeps
Some danger there to dive,
On life's light surface inly racked
We feign a joy to live.

26

Love knows not its empyreal fire
Nor of each deathless plume
The soaring strength until we weep
Stretched on the hopeless tomb.

Until with Orpheus Love descend
Oblivion's ripple brave
And clench wild hands and strain across
The loathed stygian wave.

Till for the dear lamented dead
Love by Cocytus wail
And purge on fiery Phlegethon
The fault of passion frail.

And the fair phantom from dark powers
Win back the ghost above,
Tremble to clasp, look, lose again.
Till then love is not love.

27

See love with how sad a smile
Bends over us the sky,
How earth her lonely bosom heaves
In that horizon sigh.

IMMORTAL EVE

She sighs the ancient mother lorn,
She knows the primal curse
That rends her from the starry soul
Of the wide universe.

She weeps, the disespousing iron
That made such aching blank
When Cronos struck and Uranus
Into thin ether shrank.

Look with me love and you too shall
Earth's hollow yearning feel
And find in heaven's blue desolate
The rift that will not heal.

28

Are human hearts but the surge and swell
Upon one boundless main ?
We lift and in vexed virgin foam
Break lonely and in vain.

Around us all is unknown sea,
God's mighty vast. To meet
Billow to billow we would bend
And make the saltness sweet.

Vainly I In passionate pure foam
With heavenward arch we rise
To reach our sister wave. In froth
We sink back from the skies.

Did high heaven spurn us ? Were we lost
In ocean's roomy all,
Upon our own salt loneliness
In bitter sprays we fall.



IMMORTAL EVE

29

Profoundest melancholys hrouds
The world's close guarded truth,
Solemn the skies are, sad the clouds,
A poignant dream our youth.

I know not what strange pleasure stirs,
Heaves, in these sighs of ours ;
A bitter something surges up
To anguish amid flowers.

We cannot one heart-happy kiss
Exchange, but we must die
For the brief bliss and longing of it,
To sever you and I.

And why should beauty dart through us
So infinte a pang ?
And why must wildly idle tears
Gush, if some sweet bird sang ?

30

Above us the blue vault ; around,
Beneath nothing but sea,
Infinite height, unfathomed depth !
And we, then what are we

Who madly skyward throw ourselves
Or plunge toward the abyss,
Fearfully free to wander, fond
To be whelmed in a kiss ?

Dots in the vast, our loneliness
We feel, we would not roam
Frail, homeless, drifting specks toward heaven
We heave, yet find no home

329



IMMORTAL EVE

Either in kindred littleness
 Yearned for, or yet above ;
Ah, foiled lift toward infinity !
 Ah, baffled reach of love !

31

The one divine mysterious life
 In whom we are, live, move,
Our hourly Maker, makes Himself
 Forever, the primal love.

One and the same He weaves Himself
 Through all this warp of being,
Alone in vastness shivers up
 Thought, beauty, passion, seeing,

Life's million multiple, he stoops
 Creation's lot to share,
He, in the world's dim sorrow is,
 He, in its rapture rare.

O love, take comfort. The high Love,
 He feels our trembling kiss
And in our bitter salt of tears
 The primal glory is.

32

In the beginning ! Time to him
 One vast forever is
Wherein his glorious works but pause,
 Perfection not to miss.

Still in his brooding dream the bud
 Lies darkling at command,
He lingers that the rose more fresh
 And lovely may expand.



IMMORTAL EVE

And love the soul's flower, of his works
Most wonderful he spun
Out of his anguish, cloud, storm, tears
Ere two hearts could be one.

Star-counselled, brooding, love his task
For day too delicate,
Invisibly in the dim hush
He perfected with fate.

33

No alter need we ; God, our life,
God, the world's strength and bliss,
To worship the glad grateful heart
Best lowly alter is.

Bring not a pastoral Arcady
As the old patriarchs did
To bleed the sweet lamb's innocence
The lovely sportive kid.

Nor violate the holy life
Of blossoms and green things
For garlands, He who made us all
Abhors such offerings.

Bring the hearts fragrant sighs to grow
Good, gentle, wise ; let bleed,
Let die the littlest thought that swerves
From love, the littlest deed.



IMMORTAL EVE

X

1

A door in heaven oped suddenly :
Out from the blissful throng
A sainted glory came and dwelt
With me. It was not long.

She strained the mercy of the heavens
With sinful me to bide,
Her pity for a worthless man,
Her love she could not hide.

She loved me. 'Twas my sin, a crime
I expiate, her love,
Who like a trembling dewdrop smiled,
Glanced eager like a dove.

Her smile that trembling drop is spilt,
The dove-eyes they are fled,
'Tis closed, that glory-chink in heaven,
She loved me, she is dead.

2

My drooping flower, my Maloti,
Your dear head hang not so !
You wither on the stem, alas !
But tell me, then, your woe.

You gaze upon me speechless, dumb.
The sorrow that constricts
Your throat no utterance gives, to tell
What 'tis your heart afflicts.

It is that old hysteria's ail,
The cost that woman pays
To bring forth children. With your night
You have increased the days.



IMMORTAL EVE

Gloom, silence ! Is it thus He needs
Your motherhood sublime,
With your birth-throes and agony
To new-stock failing time ?

3

Time with thy hourglass and thy scythe
Threat not my love and me,
Know'st thou not lovers deathless are
And love eternity ?

Misers of time, sad, loveless souls
Self hugging thou may'st fright,
Thy running sands and minutes are
To lovers sheer delight.

We breast the steep upsurge of day
With spirits fresh as foam,
Night's downy plunge our loving heads
Together pillows home.

Where true hearts hoard love's secret wealth
A kiss will serve to buy
Oblivion of thy hungry scythe
And fickle hours that fly.

4

O murdered spirit now with those
Who the palm branches bear
Down from the martyr's heaven of joy
Look on your murderer.

Look on these penitential lines,
And if a tear drop be
Permitted to a soul in bliss
Read, love, and weep with me.



IMMORTAL EVE

Read ; let your pitying tears blot out
The worst, but guide my pen
The secret legend of your love
Truly to tell to men.

Love was your suffering martyrdom,
My crime, you are in heaven
I upon earth in these sad songs
Weep, dear, to be forgiven.

5

It was to others that she spoke
Kindly in words. To me
The lavish silence of her look
Reserved its oratory.

For oft from casual speech I felt
The glory of her gaze,
Sidelong with starry secrecies,
My beating heart amaze ;

How oft to greet me, send a ray
From those dark depths, my heaven,
Millioned with thought-fires to my look
Sweet answers hath she given.

Now she is gone, from heaven itself
The angels of her eyes
Visit my heart's vexed loneliness
With comforting replies.

6

Look, as some long-lost glorious star
From where it sinks to sight
Shoots a far-travelled splendid ray,
The after-age to light ;

IMMORTAL EVE

So through the wreck of beauty gone
Your bright look comes to me ;
Surviving angels, your dear eyes,
Still illumine memory.

How can the glory that was you
Still light my soul, a sun,
And you, the glory-shooter, you,
Whelm'd, sunk in oblivion ?

Its splendour was the star. Your soul,
The real of you, survives,
Homes to the spirit ; ray on ray
For ever still arrives.

7

"What is that vast eternity
In your dear eyes begun ?"
I asked, she answered, "Tis to see
From God's side of the sun."

"And our sad world ?" "It is the same
Eternity, but seen
Through a glass dimly-tarnished, flashed
A duller gold and green."

"And can the beatific, bright,
Sheen prospect sorrow move ?"
"We see the whole world in the light
Of pity and of love."

A hero now I see you, dear ;
Know what our last life meant ;
With larger eyes compassionate
I see, and am content.



IMMORTAL EVE

8

Whence came the tragic thread of fate
 Into our love's romance ?
The stage must darken ! Did harsh truth
 Break in upon the dance ?

Was she not beautiful ? Was I
 Not hers, madly in love ?
Did she match my faithful sighs ?
 Ah pitying saints above,

A sinful man your holy shrines
 I left, idolator
Turned renegade for her fair eyes
 My vows I paid to her.

Such heavenly sweetness to adore
 Abased I could not be.
But the fatality lay here,—
 Oh friend, she worshipped me !

9

Nothing can happen unforeseen
 Our forehead is our fate,
God scored on our eventful palms
 Our story and our date.

We in the little things have scope
 He wills the large events,
His vast prevision overrules
 Our blundering intents.

Your name was on my heart inscribed,
 Towards your loveliest eyes
Through paths how devious was I led
 By shaping destinies.

IMMORTAL EVE

You homed upon my bosom, dear,
With looks of fond amaze,
I sailed into the wished for port
Of your remembered gaze.

10

No rock-hewn old Egyptian tomb,—
Be song her sepulchre,
And hope's heaven-pointing pyramid
Her memory inter.

Let poesy her lovely sleep,
Her life that dead appears
Steep in the balsam of all sighs,
The holy salt of tears.

And with the fragrant myrrh of praise,
Whole, incorruptible
Her beauty for eternal days
Embalm, in verse to dwell.

In this immortal monument
No wizened mummy shall
Tell to the world what once so breathed,
Laughed, sang, was musical.

11

Oft in the lonely midnight I
Conjure those angel eyes
To shine on my repentant crime,
Appoint its penalties.

A word, a gesture or a look
What ignorant shaft was it,
What fault I know not, that so hard
Your heavenly patience hit.



IMMORTAL EVE

Beginning to be angel then
A smiling mask you wore,
Not from your silence could I get
What wounded you so sore.

Still, though in heaven, your angel eyes
Consulted will not tell,
I curse my frailties, chide my faults,
You smile inscrutable.

12

Imagination, lovely power,
Whose day-bound haunted eyes
Fret at the shallow shows of things,
Lead where my lost love lies ;

Lead, where remembrance in her track
Whispering would have thee go,
Lead by immortal longing winged
The way that Love must know.

By reason to the shows of sense
A prisoner chained all day,
Now darkness and descending night
Softly release away !

Past hindrance of dull earthly sense
Let fantasy thy car
Wing me where slumber and wise dream
The gates of truth unbar.

13

Unto her absent royalty
Who queened my days and me,
My thoughts in tender loyalty
Forever bows the knee.

IMMORTAL EVE

The empty world her palace is
For my heart thrones her face,
And each fair thing a chalice is
Brimmed with her living grace.

Behind the day-pomp's curtaining
She sits forever queen,
This gorgeous hiding tapestry
Of blue and gold and green.

All day forlorn sweet memories
And fond thoughts fealty
Offer her. But at night, at night
Their own dear queen they see.

14

Ah, reckless, old, sweet laughing hours
How could you hurry by
So lightly then ? I did not think
That aught like her could die.

Such blissful immortality
Day from her presence caught,
In a long dream, a trance of joy
You flew, without a thought,

No inkling gave. I could not think
She was a mortal thing
Could she so frolic, sunlight, so
Laugh like you and take wing ?

And still in dreams she visits me
So fair, fresh utterly,
So laughing real, I weep awake,
Sighing to think 'twas she.



IMMORTAL EVE

15

Divine remembrance, O what power
Is yours to vivify !
You in eternal amber keep
No trivial things that die.

Her random sweetness, casual charm,
Each smile, look, attitude
Transformed a deathless glory wear
When you begin to brood.

Jewels of her plain everyday
Dropped in your magic deep
By the crude present, how they shine
In their translucent sleep,

Like submerged pebble glimmering
How gloriously fair,
Things prized not, trivial, common deemed
The faultful sweet of her.

16

Reft of her peerless argentine
With lilies let me talk,
Lilies her kinsfolk since she went
They queen the garden walk.

Of tuber-rose and artagon,
Madonna, Turk's Cap, all
I seek the heavy sympathy
Her sweet face to recall.

They know my sorrow every one,
Each princess tall and pale,
Remembrance for their odour sighs.
The never tired tale.



IMMORTAL EVE

How sweet she was, pose, stature, grace
A lily past compare,
Queen of the sacred sisterhood
Of all that's pure and fair.

17

Life is not life merely to live,
To fend and drudge and eat,
But life is life, a look, a smile
Made by love's magic sweet.

Your bright look on my stony road
Glorified earth's dust,
Your smile transfigured made all gold
And glamour life's hard must.

I miss the soul-lift that was you,
I feel the body's chain,
The jolt of life's rough weary road,
The cart-wheel creak of pain.

When you were with me, as on wings
The stony track I cut,
But now it jolts with me, it jars
I stick in every rut.

18

Yet on my lonely onward road
Although I flinch and fear
A soul sustaining whisper comes
Your strengthening voice I hear.

The memory of your lovely pain
How helpless, without feet,
Dumb almost, your sick bed you braved
With suffering patience sweet,



IMMORTAL EVE

All, I remember. While I wince
Under time's tyranny,
Pain, weakness, nor your strength evince
In fetters to seem free.

Even while I shrink to taste your cup
Be stoical and great,
I hear your smiling fortitude
Say "Poete, non dolet."

19

I mind me how her smile was sweet
And how her look was gay,
How she was laughter, joy complete
And can she now be clay ?

I see the rose upon her grave,
They make my sad heart bleed,
I see the daisies shine like stars
And is she earth indeed ?

All lovely things with beauty are,
And just deeds shine as just,
And faith and truth and duty are
And is she only dust ?

The strange soft sky is solemn blue,
The earth is wonderous fair,
Things in their place eternal be,
She nothing, she no-where ?

20

How can your figure blotted be
From nature's mighty sum ?
'Tis rife with rumour. In rich hints
Upon my heart you come.

IMMORTAL EVE

The mirror that once glassed your face
 Idly my sighs may stain,
Upon my heart's dim forest pool
 You come and come again.

The world that once you made so real
 Cannot with you dispense,
Ah just behind this pomp of things
 Your beauty burns intense.

At a bird's note I catch my breath,
 I startle at a flower,
Only your sweet reality
 Could have on me such power.

21

As in some still life picture things
 Seem to have power and will,
Seem in their dumbness eloquent
 Almost to stir and feel.

So in her chamber everything
 Just as she left it lies :
Hat, cloak and dainty parasol
 Each to my look replies,

Each vivid with her loveliness
 Full of her own warm life
Her breathing presence own, bespeak
 Of her laughter-rife.

They at my sad eyes questioning
 Half blush and me disgrace
That I should doubt. They hear her step
 And laugh out in my face.



IMMORTAL EVE

22

'Tis vain to weep and mourn our dead
 Since all must pass that door,
I study but to follow, love,
 Now you are gone before.

One ferry wafts us. Homer's harp
 Or Helen's lovely lip
The selfsame obol in the mouth
 Defrays the stygian ship.

No longer will I weep for you.
 There's Virgil ; there's each Greek
Master of matchless song. I go ;
 It is the Shades I seek

Where all things lovely, all things wise
 Are gone, I seek you, sweet.
Nature, majestic Sibyl leads
 Or some wing'd Hermes fleet.

23

That thinking breathing miracle,
 Your sentient body—soul,
Not what you ate and drank, but you —
 O'er that no tomb can roll.

Life, thought, emotion, the sweet power
 That with your bosom swelled
And drank and ate and shaped the flower,
 Within a goddess dwelled.

'Twas that which souled your lips to smiles,
 Flash'd all heaven in a look,
With thought and passion wrote the page,
 Your beauty made a book.



IMMORTAL EVE

Your throbbled life, music, mystery,
Can soul divine have fled ?
The shrine may crumble, it was clay.
The goddess, is she dead ?

24

Shall I with sighing avarice
Old time beseech thy stay ?
Nay, nay, thy rapid minutes wing
And roll months, years away.

This dance of planets round the sun
Hurrying toward Hercules
With fearless music let it run
Carrying earth, moon and seas,

I, too, towards as bright a Sign
Lured by each lovely fire
Am hurled with force Herculean, driven
Through heavens of lone desire.

What matters ? If we crash, we merge,
Out of her lovely eyes,
Out of my love I know in flames
A new world shall arise.

25

Extinction ? No, some wondrous change
To us dreamers on earth
Solemn, stupendous. It must be
As natural as birth.

Some steps, no far flight onward, up
From where the dog began
To climb with that adoring look
Fixed on his master man,

IMMORTAL EVE

A lovely laughing animal,
The child from him proceeds,
And up to human stature grows
With suffering, thoughts and deeds,

All that you were, or bloomed toward,
Love, to be angel made,
Mind's, heart's experience you have ta'en
To wing that escalade.

26

Since God, the pulsing soul of life
Fills all things with his breath,
The universe instinct with Him,
There is no room for death.

From Him this pageantry of being
Forever streams and hums.
The world is in the making still,
It is what He becomes.

Though forms and colours change and fade,
All things in him survive
Passed through his crucible to be
More lovely, more alive.

You by his glorious alchemy
Transmuted have passed through,
I linger in the pot of change
And weltering dream of you.

27

Still must the world remembering
In all that meets my view,
That infinite suggestion sweet
Whisper which once was you.



IMMORTAL EVE

Let but my spirit's eyelids ope
And real, although remote,
Up in some lovely shape or sound
Will your fair image float.

Why should the roses hint you so
Or your look light a star
To haunt with beauty's empty ghost
The world ? You breathe and are ;

In the great Mother's train you walk
In Nature. Where are you
That your reflected loveliness
Passing I glass back true ?

28

The spiritual pleasure palls,
To your touch, presence sweet
Being unseen I tire, nor think
Your image dear, to be it.

That lovely phantom is not you,
I know, 'tis memory's
Picture of you. And this that hangs
Close by is Fancy's piece.

A slavish copy that, and this
A vague wild sketch : 'tis all
Yet do they help me grope to you
The dear original.

Hope, Memory, holding each a hand
Blindfold toward you I walk,
Blindfold I catch your sightless shape
With you hold tongueless talk.



IMMORTAL EVE

29

Paeon of Immortality,
O Godward peal of praise !
Ring, ring within my mortal ears,
My fainting spirit raise.

I falter, flag in the great rhythm
That thunders up to bliss :
I tremble, in this chime of worlds
One little voice to miss.

Hard, hard in Nature's choral praise
I find my part to bear,
Since one soft lute, her gentle voice,
Her laugh, I cannot hear.

The sun may give his golden shout,
Her silver song the moon,
And brook and bird chime in ; but I
Am jangled, out of tune.

30

I hear one in a murmur soft
This pitying thought conceal,
"He's mad poor fellow ! The dear lost
He greets as present, real,"

Is she not real ? Can dust, death,
Invisibility.
Time's garment of forgetfulness
Thrown over her blind me ?

Reader I am not less assured
Of her this moment by,
Over my shoulder reading now
Than that who writes am I,



IMMORTAL EVE

And you who read this shall be you
Though you I see not. We
Who are and were and shall be, needs
Must be immortally.

31

Death, parting but illusion is.
We climb towards His face
Continuous as the rainbow's arch
Though it break off at base.

'Tis lost in clouds, invisible
Here, but aloft 'twill show,
This fragment, our two severed lives
A glorious perfect bow.

With purest sorrow towards your face
Through storm and cloudloom wet
I build a glittering bridge of tears
And mount towards you yet.

Your vanish through the cloud, 'twas planned
To try us, make more sweet
Sight of each other when in heaven
The rainbow shines complete.

32

This stairway and ascending pomp,
Life, whither does it flow
From the prime jelly up through man
This tireless come and go ?

It mounts toward happier, lovelier, higher,
It is no fickleness
Prompts the eternal spiral up
In bettering change of dress.

IMMORTAL EVE

Up to the clouds it mounts, and there
The pomp, the vision stops ;
From blue unpeopled heights of air
Ethereal music drops.

We were the shoes on God's mired feet
Below, there at the base,
Midway his labouring hands we tool.
The angels see His face.



IMMORTAL EVE

XI

1

You are a rune I pore upon
Like some papyrus scroll,
You breed the more bewilderment
The more I you unroll.

Life's last word, beauty's latest truth,
Newest of things you seem,
Yet your dim hieroglyph to read
Were to interpret dream.

The mystic source, your loveliness
That floods me, I, the boon,
May bless ; but never hope to reach
Those mountains of the moon.

Mysteriously you smile on me,
A Sphinx, from sands of fire
You point with soaring pyramids
My dream and my desire.

2

I think a soul-shape grows behind
Your body's screening view.
'Tis what the deathless sculptor, Life,
Carves out of what is you.

Your essence, spiritual stuff,
Laughter, thought, effort, will,
Joy, suffering, all you feel, think, do,
Like Parian marble still,

Life chisels, the ulterior you,
Brow, cheek angelical,
And figure on life's handsome mould
Modelled till it excel.

IMMORTAL EVE

Then when the atom-quarried mask
 You drop, shall beam to sight
The dear familiar face I know,
 Grown deathless, infinite I

3

This glory garland is not you,
 The life of you, the flame,
Some quintessential odour lurks
 Unknown without a name.

The petals rich that from your rose
 But flaunt you to the day,
Your inmost soul-bloom is no flower
 To fade and fall away.

'Tis something secret, infinite,
 Remote, that never shows,
Your looks and smiles, your deed and words
 Come from the unknown rose.

That nothing sweet that loads the air,
 Invisible perfume,
It is the beautiful of you
 That built you into bloom.

4

Age and decay, ply, ply your powers,
 Assault her beauty. She,
That which she is, what inly flowers,
 For ever blooms, is free.

Rain, sorrow, down those lovely cheeks I
 Stream your remorseless flood !
You drench deep, happy roots, to make
 Her spirit freshly bud.



IMMORTAL EVE

Parch, fever's burning eye, this park
This greensward beautiful
Her flesh ; the eternal violet
Lies caverned, mossy, cool :

It trembles ineradicable,
That harebell sweet ; it grows.
Rough winds but shake down the dead leaves
That feed the deathless rose.

5

The one thing that you cannot change
Yourself that steadfast truth
Immortal, self-inalienable,
That never shall Time's tooth

Devour. Its substance shall survive
This tenancy of dust,
The unknown glory of your eyes
Is armoured beyond rust.

These grains, these atoms are not your cheek,
Spirit that mists in bloom,
Not all that shaping flower of you
Fears winter or the tomb.

Your habitation, this frail shell,
Time, change may shuffle off,
That which the lovely spiral whorled,
Yourself you cannot doff.

6

What the illimitable heaven
To utter still refrains,
Bends in that awful azure down
To speak, yet mute remains.



IMMORTAL EVE

What vasty ocean, all his waves
Rolls on a curded beach,
Foams whitely inarticulate
To say, yet cannot reach,

What stars must tremble in dumb fire
Yet ever leave unsaid,
Waters mirror, and odorous flowers
But hint with hanging head.

What grass must green out, roses blush
Or whitely think, the sealed
Eternal mystery, dear, to me
Is in your face revealed.

7

And do they perish, the fair flowers—
This blushing come-and-go
Of roses, that so crimson burn,
Of lilies, pure as snow ?

Dust, nothing, they ? Such vital charm,
Such bloom ? It cannot be !
They too, like us, are spirits clothed
For thought, joy, agony.

They too, though stirless, souls that live
In the eternal life,
Take armour, fragrantly enlist,
Sweet soldiers, to the strife,

Here in the battle beautiful,
Where fights the universe,
To God's far dream, the unknown good,
The bliss without a curse.



IMMORTAL EVE

8

Violets have no deeper blooming
Nor so vague their spell,
What rich thoughts your eyes are glooming
Pansies cannot tell.

What it is your voice's ocean
Murmurs, no one know^s ;
On your speechless cheek emotion
Burns beyond the rose.

Why should your entrancing lily
Bleach the thought of white,
You, a dancing daffodily,
Mirror all delight ?

With a thousands thoughts they kiss us
Dying soon as born,
Pined at beauty's lone narcissus
Echo-like, forlorn.

9

The dim reluctant stone I shaped
To vision had ensouled,
The more to heavenlier mystery,
The more to earth I mould.

She, too, in her heart's temple shrined
An image throned on high,
Worshipped, with incense and with tears,
The god she dreamed was I.

She of her heart forever makes
A stair to climb to me,
I carve her to remoter height,
We build but mystery.



IMMORTAL EVE

'Twas so revealed where Egypt still
In stone and granite thinks,
Backed by the soaring pyramids
Eternal smiles the sphinx.

10

So far above me and so strange
You twinkle O, my star I
Just like a child I watch you, how
I wonder what you are.

From dandling me upon her arm
My nursing mother, love,
Holds me towards you, whilst you shine
A trembling fire above.

With solemn awe I listen, she
Tells me you are a world,
A sun, a glorious sun that moves
Through heavenly distance hurled.

What suns may be or shining worlds,
A child, I cannot know,
I only know that you are bright
And wonder up, just so.

11

Is all we know, then, that we know
Nothing ? For certain, yes.
Yet your face time's arch-riddle put
We risk a pregnant guess.

No more deep-browed philosophy
Questions the world, content
To read its secret in your smile,
The secret that God meant.



IMMORTAL EVE

Vision, dream, beauty, that far search,
Perfection, through all time,
Poets forget, to muse upon
Your eyebrow's married rhyme ;

And sculpture finds in your soft chin,
And painting in your cheek
The eternal rose of mystery
Ever on point to speak.

12

I think that all philosophies
But sum themselves in you,
They branch out hopeless labyrinths,
You offer us the clue.

The idols of the market place,
Theatre, cave, may blind
Others, not me—who truth's last word
In you and beauty find.

Truth is but one, and so are you,
Truth, beauty whole and sheer
To all those abstract guesses dim
How plain, how crystal clear.

Your lovely eyes my wisdom are,
The light by which I live,
And you my categorical
Sweet, first, imperative.

13

No scornful lantern will I flash
Through street and ally round
Seeking a man, the one divine
Sweet sovereign woman found.

IMMORTAL EVE

Having the world's dear conqueror
And my heart's by, I dare
Bid mighty Alexander stand
Out of my light and air.

To doff the world for your sake,
For you in whom I see
Mankind's sweet flower and paragon
Is not misanthropy.

For your sake let men gibe, and me
A dog, a cynic dub,
Contented in your light and air
To live and roll my tub.

14

Your eyes are wisdom's painted porch,
A fortitude so pure
They teach me, the strong stoic rule
To abstain and endure.

From all enveigling shows of good,
Fame, wealth, they rally me
To Beauty, Nature's sovereign truth
That souls reality.

The logic of what's rational
They teach, all else despise,
Only to be loved happy is,
Only to love is wise ;

Sole armour against shocks of fate
Or blows of chance to find
Ourselves, each other, freedom, joy
In love, the constant mind.



IMMORTAL EVE

15

No Epicurian walks withdrawn,
No tranquil garden close,
Could teach me half, such wise content
As you my breathing rose.

Could anything be fresher, say,
Than is your temperate cheek
Pure lovely pleasures to array
'Gainst anguish and heartbreak.

You who are nature, no poesy,
To shut out grief and care,
Have all Leontion's smile, can teach
True Atapeia.

In you against the crashing heavens
Surcease of dread I find,
My garden and my school you are
To teach repose of mind.

16

So weary to be flowing still
Irked with time's wave, so sad
The sage Ephesian could not be,
As the Abderite was glad

Who laughed his hundred years away,
Yet scarce so happy he
To miss primordial fire and find
But atom-anarchy.

Whether from water came or fire
The world, or from the play,
The casual clash of atoms small,
O love, let us be gay.



IMMORTAL EVE

Discordant concord, ebb and flow,
The world is music still,
Love tunes the jangling, jarring spheres
And our hearts own his skill.

17

He reads the world's harmonious scheme,
To him the cosmic lyre
Pealed, who eternal motion knew,
Traced all things up to fire.

We write on water. All flows on ;
Yet though the rapture fly,
Courage, another kiss. What's past,
Shall memory glorify.

Its sunk fire in remembrance lives,
Part of us now, and scope,
Strength for the mounting billow gives,
Fuels the fire of hope.

Time's motion springs from fire. Then why,
O fiery particle,
Of the eternal mind, didst thou
A weeper with us dwell.

18

A fable, we hear speak of her,
The soul, inscrutable,
Strange, riddling monster. Who shall dare
Her riddle read and tell ?

Yet in his pathway couched, each meets
Soul, the eternal sphinx,
Ponders her questioning, strange smile,
Over that puzzle thinks.



IMMORTAL EVE

"Whence and what art thou", she would seem
To say, "what art thou man?"
She puts the world's eternal riddle,
Interpret he who can.

But save some tragic Oedipus
Led to those eyes that bleed,
Led to his bitter awful doom,
Her riddle none can read.

19

The snail said to the butterfly,
Your airy flutterings gay
Distress me. Cease to dance on air
You take my breath away.

It is a parlous world my friend
A world of trap and gin,
Pauseful and wary learn like me
To house a shell within.

Your house, (the wind and rain may beat)
You carry on your back,
In comfort safe and snug you hide,
The world may go to wrack.

Prudence and caution ! Learn of me
To stop consider long,
Push each way thoughtful horns and life
You'll certainly prolong.

20

The tortoise to the butterfly,
Stop lady Psyche stop !
More chary be of zephyr's back,
That vain and fickle fop.



IMMORTAL EV

To be in fashion with the spring
In Cupid's train he goes
But when he'll take to blow and rage,
Well, that one never knows.

Your goddessship had better far
Get down, and safe and sound
As when you were a mortal maid
Walk humbly on the ground.

Jove thunders. You are new to heaven,
From heaven was Vulcan hurled,
Learn of my venerable age
And knowledge of the world.

21

To the grave tortoise Psyche then ;
Nor age nor wisdom, Sir,
But beauty and calm endless joy
The glorious Gods prefer.

To be immortal all I risked
And toward love's arms did go
In the dark journey souls must take
New blissful life to know.

It is that hard, protective shell
Harms you. Secure to be
You hug a paltry prudence, lose
Bliss, immortality.

Come to Olympus, Hermes beg
Of you to make a lyre,
And you in Phoebus' hand shall turn
To music, air and fire.



IMMORTAL EVE

22

Ah not till man misfortune meets,
The worst of anguish feels,
The soul from brooding mystery
UncLOUDS in thunder peals.

For be it star-dogged Oedipus,
Be it the Dane or Lear,
The soul's dark puzzle he who solves
Must read it in a tear.

He learnt it to the bitter edge,
The sphinx's awful sooth,
When he Thebes' monarch, old and blind,
A beggar walked with truth.

With truth and loved Antigone
Oedipus found his soul,
Peace and that solemn happy close
Colonus' tranquil goal.

23

This brief for immortality
For me Remembrance hold,
And for those lost and lovely eyes
Plead thou with Reason cold.

Say crystal gazer, thee the mind's
Clear eye, can sense decieve,
Blind, with the solid shows of light
And wilt thou not believe ?

The angel sweetness that was she
Hath shed its suffering dust,
From ail to acheless triumph passed
And wilt thou yet mistrust ?



IMMORTAL EVE

In glimpses the lost truth of her
Upon my glass intense
Flame vivid, and must thou demur
Insensate slave of sense.

24

Ah ! sure some magic working power
Governs the tempest flaw,
The clash of passions reconciles
And bends to pity law.

See what the master mind of all,
Too modest to presume
To be God's spy, conceived of God,
From man in little room.

Some unseen wisdom plotting wits
Confounds before-hand, can
Make menial to his sovereign use,
As Ariel, Caliban ;

He to a fore-schemed harmony
Strives all things to attune,
Guides to each other loving hearts
And mischief turns to boon.

25

An unsubstantial shadow-show
Our little life but seems,
Rounded with sleep. We are such stuff
As dreams are made of, dreams !

So Shakespeare, all tempestous things
Weathered in tragedy,
He smiled again. Tempest's self he saw
Nothing but dream to be.



IMMORTAL EVE

From dreams like Caliban we wake
And cry to sleep again,
A dream Antonio's plot, a dream
Alonso's loss and pain.

A dream is our enchanted isle
Life, where all things must go
By wonder working power unseen
That overrules the show.

26

Two orders column history
And prop the soul of man,
The Ionian slender, tall, serene,
The massive Dorian.

In beauty Athens here like day
Quick, mobile, gay expands
Our geuius ; there like solemn night
Compressed and Spartan stands.

Resigned to darkness we our strength
With discipline becrutch,
Grave maxims are our Delphic prop,
Know thyself : not too much.

But when our Hymethus breaks
Our spirit's morn how bright
We fledge the immortal wing ! we grow
Fire, air, and all tasks light.

27

Of all things in the world most hard,
To touch the far seen goal
That lures, yet looms in mystery—
It is another soul.



IMMORTAL EVE

So near yet bafflingly remote ;
Your smile, 'twas tender, true,
Your look it dawned like a whole heaven,
'Twas not the all of you.

These are but happy sheltering havens,
To help me tackle mend,
Storm-respited, then outward sail,
And sail without an end.

In boundless lone horizons still
You spread : at you command,
A dim receding lure, a dream,
I steer for fairyland.

28

Shadow must with creation's source
Still blend. His holy light
Temper the frail ascent of being,
Make by degrees more bright.

How slowly from uncouthness huge
The world leviathan,
Toward beauty, wisdom, grew and grew
And perfected in man.

Man, the perfection of the brute,
The rudiment of things,
Lovelier and loftier discerns,
And toward the angel springs.

Love is the darkling fledge we grow,
The soul our plumage bright,
Faith, effort, aspiration, hope,
Our flappings toward the light.



IMMORTAL EVE

29

Shadow, 'tis glory's chatsened self,
The mystic tenderness
That colour's gaudy wealth subdues
And softens light's excess.

Even such a shadow, melancholy,
Love casts from burning noon,
To shade our bosoms. Happy dusk I
It is light's tender swoon.

It darkens with the strength of love :
Sorrow love's shadow is
To make the immortal soul not stray
Blinded with too much bliss.

'Tis last that muffled wrestler death
Whom love must cope, the Night
God softened with a million suns
Saying, "Let there be light."

30

How must we for relief and shade
Need still his grateful night
Who from his secret rapture came,
His passion and delight.

Like babes together you and I
Lay once upon his breast,
Were dandled in the arms of power
And drunk the milk of rest.

We from the laughter of his bliss,
The hill of his repose,
To his divine ideal fired,
Came where his smithy glows,



IMMORTAL EVE

His forge, this labour house of being,
His purpose to shape out
Through flickering shadows, smoke and gloom,
Through darkness and through doubt.

31

Each soul an ocean hides from each
In whispering mystery
Its secret. We but hear the sound
Of that far heaving sea.

We but conjecture what the dim,
Green soundless depths my hide,
From chested treasure with the foam
Rolled up of some chance tide.

We fear like children the great deeps,
The grandeur and the roar,
With simple sea-shells are content,
Washed on the sands ashore.

We Ocean's lovers will not risk
Further than the expanse
To watch the glorying bright foam,
The heaving swell, the dance.

32

Not only doth infinity
Brood on our hearts. It sighs
Through nature—all this mournful heave
Of earth, those yearning skies,

The illimitable hollow, sad,
Blue space of heaven august,
Stooping in awful sympathy
Over this ail of dust.



IMMORTAL EVE

And star fires tremble it ; the trees
 Feel in their branches groan
World-old indignity, some gash
 Remembered in the moan

Of the wild wind, and in the seethe
 And surge of ocean's pain ;
That sundering rift and chasm, of which
 Our lonely hearts complain.

33

Stars, universes, might that moves
 Guided by system, law,
Inexorable, deaf, my soul
 You shall not overawe.

Earth, on thy breast I know not whence
 I came, what powers to thank,
Nor whither, sun, thy glorious beams
 Conduct me. All is blank.

We, too, are planets wandering
 Like the round globe we tread ;
Each soul a tiny universe,
 With vastness round us spread.

Though blind we rush, what matter ? God
 Guides through the boundless ether.
What matter if, like earth and moon,
 We go, love, still together ?

34

I shall not grieve locality,
 The jail of sense four square
To leave for life's ethereal sea,
 The boundless everywhere.

IMMORTAL EV

Since light, sound, heat, a quivering each
A tremor is of it,
And the world's architecture old
The builded bliss of it.

I shall not in life's ocean lose
Those atoms that filmed thence
Issue from living, keenly real
In that eternal whence.

Thence all life surged, thence you my love
Did with the roses burn,
Where you are gone I shall not fear
With roses to return.

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